

7.5.3  
A  
TREATISE  
OF THE  
CONFESSION  
OF  
SINNE,

And chiefly as it is made unto the  
*Priests and Ministers* of the Gospel.

Together with the power of the KEYS,  
and of ABSOLUTION.

JOHN 20. 23.

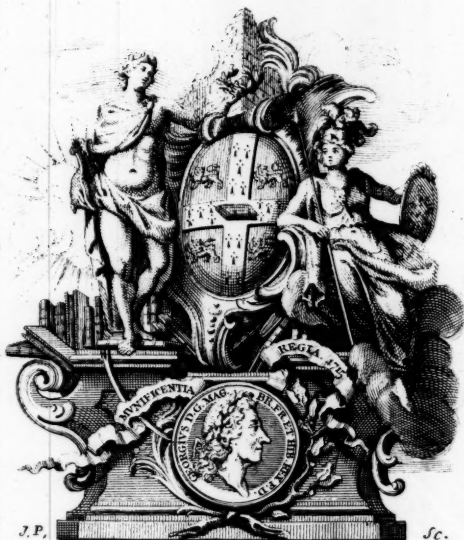
*Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and  
whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

Tantum relevat confessio delictum, quantum dissimulatio exaggerat: Confessio enim satisfactionis consilium est, dissimulatio contumaciæ. *Tertul.*

L O N D O N,  
Printed by J. G. for Andr. Crook, at the Green Dragon  
in St Pauls Church-yard. M. DC. LVII.



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# The Principal CONTENTS OF THE WHOLE BOOK.

## CHAP. I.

**T**He names of things exemplifie their nature. The Authors purpose. Heb. נחמה signifieth Repentance and Consolation, which is variously rendred by the Septuagint. Heb. תורה Confession or a casting off, by the same Interpreters is translated to give thanks, and to praise. Exagoreusis a forinsecal word, an Indictment. Exhomologesis, Metancea and Metameleia usuall in the New Testament. Resipiscence and Penitence their difference, and several uses. pag. I.

## CHAP. II.

Repentance a Conversion, and wherein it consisteth. The Fathers define it from the sensible effects and signs thereof. The Schoolmens error in placing it in bodily corrections rather than in mental change. The Reformed Divines seat it in the humiliation of the heart, requiring also outward expressions of sorrow. Conversion is the essential form of Repentance. Self abnegation, godly-sorrow, a Penitents practice and endeavour. p. 10.

## CHAP. III.

Discipline of penance wherefore enjoyned by the Church. Exhomologesis; divers kinds of Confession; publick penance of Apostolical practice. The austerity thereof in the Primitive times. Order thereof prescrib'd in the dayes of Cyprian and Ambrose. Divers examples of publick Penitents. The solemn practick thereof in Records of the Church. Sinners admitted but once to solemn Penance. Actual reconciliation denyed by the Church to lapsed sinners. No renewing unto Repentance, how understood in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Four stations observed by the an-  
cients

## The Contents.

ent Penitents. The restoring of this Discipline much desired.

### CHAP. IV.

p. 16.

*Confession of sin addressed unto God chiefly, and to Man also with considerable relations, grounded upon the Law of Nature; with God himself a necessary antecedent to pardon. Adam and Cain interrogated to extract Confession. Sundry precedents of Penitents recurring to God in Confession. There is shame in confessing to God, as well as unto Man. Penitential Psalmes composed by David for memorials and helps to Confession. The Rabbins doctrine of Confession of sin before God, practised in the time of the Gospel, preached and urged by the Ancient Fathers; and so far by Chrysostome, as a tribute due to God onely, for which the Pontificians are jealous of him. Confession before God is not destructive of Confession before man in a qualified sense, though preferred before it, and especially called for by the old Doctors, although that be of singular use also.*

P. 43.

### CHAP. V.

*Of Confession to Man. The Confession of sin under the Law before the Priest at the Altar, and the Sacrifice. Special enumeration of all sins not required of the Jews. The Law commandeth the acknowledgment of sin, and restitution. Jobs friends confessed their errors unto him, who sacrificed for them. Davids confession unto Nathan Rabbins affirming sins to be confessed unto the Fathers and Levites. The place in St James chap. 5. Of mutual Confession explained and vindicated. Testimonies of the Fathers for Confession unto man. The opinion of the Schoolmen, that sin in case of necessity, and in way of Consultation for a remedy, not in way of Absolution for reconciliation, may be detected to a Lay-man: and of the Reformed Divines. That sins may be confessed to a Believing Brother for advice, and to a Minister of the Gospel.*

### CHAP. VI.

p. 65.

*Divers Offices and administrations in the Church. The peoples Confession unto John at Jordan, wherein they were particular. The Confession of the Believers at Ephesus to St Paul. Proofs from the Fathers for Confession to the Priests of the Gospel. Such Confession withdraweth not from God, but leadeth to him. Testimonies of the worthiest Divines of the Church of England for Confession, seconded with Divines of the Reformation from the Churches beyond the seas.*

P. 90.

## The Contents.

### CHAP. VII.

*Concerning the Institution, necessity, and extent of Confession, and is divided into three Sections :*

p. III.

#### SECT. I.

*The Decrees of the Tridentine Council for Divine right, and authority of Confession. The Anathema's held too severe by some moderate Romanists. Publick Exhomologesis vilipended by these Fathers. The Schoolmens faintness in reasoning for the divine institution of Auricular Confession. The Canonists plant the same upon the universal Tradition of the Church. Divines siding with the Canonists. Oppugners of Auricular Confession in former ages. Pretences of Divine authority from places of Scripture examined. Different proceedings in the Court of Conscience from earthly Tribunals. Special cognizance of all sins not a necessary antecedent at all times to Priestly Absolution. God pardoneth many sins immediately never spoken of to a Priest. Differences of Popish Divines concerning the matter and form in Penance, prove to be no such thing as Sacramental Confession, which reacheth not higher than the Lateran Council. Confession of sin of the same institution as Repentance is. Divine institution manifold. In what sense Confession may be said to be of Divine institution.*

p. 113.

#### SECT. II.

*The abusive necessity of Confession. Tyrannical inquisition into mens consciences distasteful. Confession left at liberty in Grecians time. Schoolmen leaving to the necessity thereof. Confession not the only Necessary means for absolution and remission. The Ends aimed at in Popish confession, unnecessary. No express precept in Scripture for the absolute necessity thereof. Confession an heavy burden upon fleshly shoulders. Private Confession not practised from the beginning. Established in the place of the publick by an Edict from Leo I. The fact of Nestorius abrogating confession, with the several answers and expostitions of Roman Writers expended. Confession deserted in the Greek Church. Divers kinds and forms of Necessity. Confession in what cases necessary ; and the necessity thereof determined.*

p. 144.

#### SECT. III.

*Scrupulous enumeration of all sins decreed in late Councils. Circumstances aggravating and altering the property of sin,*

## The Contents.

ent Penitents. The restoring of this Discipline much desired.

### CHAP. IV.

p. 16.

*Confession of sin addressed unto God chiefly, and to Man also with considerable relations, grounded upon the Law of Nature; with God himself a necessary antecedent to pardon. Adam and Cain interrogated to extract Confession. Sundry precedents of Penitents recurring to God in Confession. There is shame in confessing to God, as well as unto Man. Penitential Psalmes composed by David for memorials and helps to Confession. The Rabbins doctrine of Confession of sin before God, practised in the time of the Gospel, preached and urged by the Ancient Fathers; and so far by Chrysostome, as a tribute due to God onely, for which the Pontificians are jealous of him. Confession before God is not destructive of Confession before man in a qualified sense, though preferred before it, and especially called for by the old Doctors, although that be of singular use also.*

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p. 144.

#### SECT. III.

*Scrupulous enumeration of all sins decreed in late Councils. Circumstances aggravating and altering the property of sin,*

## The Contents.

*Mill-stones to plain people. Anxious inquisition into each sin with every circumstance a perplexed peece. Particular reckonings for every sin an heavy load to the Conscience, and without expels warrant from God, implying difficulty, and impossibility, and tending to desperation. No urgent necessity to be so superstitious in casting up of all sins, and the circumstantial tails thereof. Romish closets of confession Seminaries of sin and uncleanness. Venial and reserved sins exempted by Rome from the ears of ordinary Priests, upon what grounds. Strict and specifick enumeration of sins but of late standing in the Church. General Interrogatories proposed at the hour of death from Anselme. Some sins are specially, and by name to be rehearsed in confession. The nature and quality of those sins described and determined.* p. 179.

### CHAP. VIII.

*Of the Confessary or Priest that receiveth confessions, and his authority for the same : Divided into two Sections:* p. 208.

#### SECT. I.

*The vulgarly disesteem of the power of Absolution in the hand of Priests: Keys diverse; Of 1. Authority. 2. Excellency. 3. Ministry. The office of the Ministerial key in discerning, and defining Ecclesiastical and conscientious Consistories. The gift of Science in the Priest, not properly the Key, but the Guide. Absolution a judicial act. Magistrates spiritual and temporal distinguished in their jurisdiction and ends. Bonds of sin culpable, and for sin penal. Satisfaction expiatory, vindictive. God forgiveth sins properly, and effectively. The Priest by way of application and notice; as also dispositively, qualifying by his function sinners for the same; in which he proceedeth as a subordinate cause both declaratively and operatively. The priority of binding and loosing on Earth to Heaven in respect of the sensible apprehension in the Penitent, not of the purpose and operation in God. Power of Absolution primitive in God, in his Ministers derivative and delegate. A Penitent absolving himself by the finger of Gods Spirit in what sense. The power of binding in the Church rather privative than positive, and declarative only.* p. 211.

#### SECT. II.

*Peter seized of the keys to the use of the Church. Power of Absolution conferred and confined unto Priests. Laicks using the same* not



## The Contents.

*not in case of office but necessary, and where they are the parties grieved. Bonds of the soul and sin only, loosed by this key. The accomplishment and actual donation of this power. God remiteth by the Churches act. The form of Priestly Ordination. Heresie of the Novatians denying in the Church power to reconcile Penitents. Seed and bellows thereof austerity of those times. Absolution in the Priest not absolutely efficacious, but as relating to conditions in the Penitent. The Priest not secured from failing in the act of absolution. The erring key. Priestly absolution declarative and demonstrative, and in a moral sense energetical. Judgments forinsecal are applied declarations of the Law to the fact. Absolution a Ministerial act, but powerful and judicial, but not Sovereign nor despotical. The spirit of judgment to discern and determine, how necessary for Priests in the act of absolution. Fathers making Priests Judges of the Conscience. The exercise of the keys, 1. In the word of reconciliation: 2. In Prayer; ancient forms of absolution expressed in a deprecative manner, not indicative: 3. In the Sacraments: 4. In interdictions and relaxations of publick censures. Keys abused at Rome, dangerous to Sovereign Majesties and Republicks. The superstition of Roman Priests in usurping upon Divine right, subjecting the power of forgiveness in God to their arbitraments. Their preposterous way in absolving first, and afterwards in enjoining Penance. The feigned virtue of absolution Ex opere operato, destructive of Piety and penitency. Conditions requisite in the Penitent to be relieved by the keys, and lawful use of Absolution.*

### CHAP. IX.

p. 239.

*Paternal affection in the Confessary. Good for sheep if the shepherd know their diseases. Medicinal Confession. The grief better healed when clearer opened. Ghostly counsel of great importance to a Penitent. Great care in the choice of a discreet Confessor. Rome's rigid Tenet. Absolution denounced by any Priest besides the Ordinary to be invalid. The inconveniences thereof. The Parochial Priest not to be deserted without just cause, and the same to be approved by the Diocesan.*

p. 282.

### CHAP. X.

*Many positive precepts without fixed times. The practick for times and seasons left to the Churches arbitration. Times necessary*

## The Contents.

ry for Confession, when particular persons and consciences are perplexed. Times convenient for all Christians; 1. When visited with desperate diseases. 2. Upon the undertaking of solemn actions and exploits accompanied with danger, and needing special help from God. 3. Upon the receiving of the blessed Eucharist, before which Confession to the Priest is alwayes Convenient, and sometimes necessary; and the neglect thereof in some cases damnable.

p.295.

### CHAP. XI.

*All convenient secrecy apprimely requisite in the Confessary. Suspicion of discovery a great enemy to confession. Sins already committed with expressions of grief to be concealed. The Schoolmen bringing sins de futuro to be committed, within the compass of the seal. The damnable doctrine of the Jesuites, that Treasons and Conspiracies yet plotting against Church or State, and confessed to the Priest, ought to be shut up in privacy. The odious consecratories and inconveniences thereof. Examples of sundry Confessors revealing treasons detected in Confession. The preservation of Prince, Church or State to be preferred before the secrecy of the Seal. Sins opened in confession, the concealment whereof complieth not with the Priests fidelity to his Prince and Countrey, to be discovered. Marriage in the Clergy no prejudice to the lawful secrecy of the seal, especially if the penalty of the old Canons against the violaters thereof should be revived.* p.300.

### CHAP. XII.

*An Historical relation of the Canons and Constitutions of the Church of England concerning Confession, and the practice thereof by some of the chief Members in the same.*

p.312.

O F  
C O N F E S S I O N  
O F  
S I X X E.

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Π Ρ Ο Θ Ε Ω Ρ Ι Α.



**B**E perswaded (industrious Reader) to stand a little at the Gate, and receive this light in the Porch; lest a scandal may be taken where none is given. The *subject* the Author of this ensuing discourse treateth upon, is a *duty* of late times laid aside, and which through the *habuia*, and sluggishness of our devotion hath waxed old (as it were) and wasted it self, but now beginneth to peep out from under a cloud of many abuses, and the sinews thereof requickned with spirits and motion, as the *Historian* said of the decayed *Empire of Rome*. And because the practice thereof is no whit plausible to flesh and blood, it is likely to be opposed by all such that are not guided by the Spirit: He foreseeth also that some (though otherwise well minded) may herein be contrary-minded, which may well come to pass by not looking narrowly into the *duty* it self, covered under a mass of inordinances, and thereupon crying down the *duty* because of the *abuse*. But his hope is, *they* will be better perswaded,

*Inertia Caesarum quasi consenuit, atq; decexit, nisi sub Trajano Principe movet lacertos, &c. Florus Prolog. histor.*

## Of Penitential Confession.

perswaded, when *they* shall perceive the same to be defecated, and disabused.

The matter it self is of no small importance, and conducing to Repentance for sin, and Remission: And herein a great and learned Antiquary said truly, that *the chiefest point of the Ecclesiastical state and function is taken up in Repentance it self, the use and administration thereof.* His care hath been most in separating betwixt the light and darkness, the thing it self, and the abuse thereof; and his aim the reviving of this discipline as it was practised from the beginning. For the undertaking whereof, how mean a place Humane Respects have had with *him*, his heart best knoweth, in whose *Conscience* that of the *Apostle* maketh no small impression, *If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ;* and his prayer is, never to be so far destitute of Grace, as to comply with man, and to come off from God. *Smoothers* of great Personages, and *Detractors* of men in place, he distastes alike; and stands in an equal distance to the *ambitious*, that desire many preferments, but discharge none; and to the *Male-content*, disquieting himself because his worth or hopes are small.

The integrity he hath observed in the carriage of this subject, he maketh over to be discerned by the judicious and candid Reader; and the freedom to his own *conscience*; for of all things *Faith* and *Religion* indure restraint and the fetters worst: *Sueton* took to himself as much freedom in writing the lives of the *Cæsars*, as they did to themselves in living. And *Divines* are *Dispensers*, and in *Dispensers* fidelity is most set by. His desire also is to be censured with the like sincerity and freedom as he hath written. Very justly was *Apelles* reprehended by *Lycippus* another *Picturer*, for painting *Alexander* with

*Ecclesiastica  
re functioni-  
que precipua  
pars peniten-  
tiæ, ipsa, usu  
& administra-  
tione continetur.* Dionys.  
Petav. ani-  
madvers. in  
Epiphaniæ.  
ref. 59.

Περὶ τοῦ  
μετανοεῖν  
καὶ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι  
τὸν ἑαυτοῦ  
ἁμαρταν.  
Gal. 1. 10.

*Prosius cā li-  
bertate scripsit  
Cæsarium vitas,  
quā vixerunt  
ipst. Erasim. in  
Sueton. Epi-  
stolar. lib. 28.  
Οὐκ ὀνομασι.  
1 Cor. 4. 2.*

## Of Penitential Confession.

with a *thunderbolt* in his hand, when as he himself had set him forth with a *spear*; for humours truly represented are lasting, but false and counterfeit colours vanish into smiles and oblivions; and far better it is to write what is *true* and *just*, than what is *great* and *plausible*. In the various censures of the Times *he* neither expecteth nor flattereth himself with the hope of a general applause. For *I suppose* (saith an ancient Father) *no man hath ever been so fortunate in his writings, as to encounter with no contradiction*, but let him hold himself well appay'd, if none can justly control him.

Plutarch. lib. de Iside, & Osiride.

ἐκ δὲ μακρὰν τινα  
ἐκ τῶν ἐκλογῶν  
γενεῶν ἡγεῖ-  
ται, ὃ ἡ μὲν δὲ  
ἀντὶ τῆς ἐκ-  
λεξ. Strom.  
lib. 1. pag. 203.

That *he* hath promiscuously used the name of *Priest* as of *Minister*, *he* is well assured will give no distaste, especially to those *Brethren* who are contented to head their party with the name of *Presbyter*, seeing also that *sacred Officers* of the *Church of England*, whereof *himself* hath had the honour to be one, are admitted into the *order of Priesthood*; and *Clergy men* so initiated, are in most of the *Western* languages known by that denomination: nor can any be justly offended, to be called by that name as *ἐπίσκοπος* under the Gospel, since the *Doctor of the Gentiles* styles himself the *Minister of Jesus Christ*, and *ἐπίσκοπος*, performing the duty of a *Priest* about the Gospel, as *Henry Stephan* rendereth it: The name importing no more than one *sacrum Dei administrans Evangelium*, set apart to administer the Gospel, or set over the publick worship and service of God. And a very Learned man of our own side is of opinion, that as the name of *Minister* may not amiss and according to the Scripture phrase signifie all that are initiated and admitted into *holy Orders*; so it is not fit and proper to distinguish betwixt a *Deacon* and *Presbyter*.

Πρεσβύτερος  
Presbytero, Hispan.  
Presbiter, Gallic.  
Priester, Germ.  
Ppeor, Saxon.  
Rom. 15. 16.  
Sacra functione  
circa Dei Evangelium  
fungens.  
Castalio.  
ἐπίσκοπος ἐπὶ  
μὲν τῶν ψυχῶν  
πρεσβύτερος  
τῶν δὲ ἐκκλησιῶν  
τῶν Θεῶν. Ety-  
molog. M.  
In Sacerdotis  
locum non com-  
modum satis  
vocabulum substi-  
tutum Mini-  
strorum; quo

licet omnes qui sacro funguntur munere ritē, & ex Scripture usu appellentur, non tamen eo Presbyteri à Diaconis distinguuntur. Jos. Mede Commentar. in Apocalyp. part. 2. p. 237.

Further-

*Of Penitential Confession.*

Furthermore this Treatise would be esteemed as *one* whose *studies are nourished in the shade*, and whose helps extend not beyond his own *Study*, and the *Authors* by him used and cited, to be of his own acquaintance. If *he* might presume, the *Church of England* should be his *Patron*, to the *pillars* thereof, and their *feet* *he* humbly submitteth his discourse, and to the *benignity* of his *candid Readers*; whose gentle and upright dealing with *him* will richly supply the defect of a more *specificque Patronage*. However *he* is resolved to rely upon the *shield of Gods favour*, and the *testimony* of his own *Conscience*. And thus much by way of Preface, where his mind was to have said more, or else not so much.

*Studia (ut sic  
dixerim) in  
umbra educata.  
Seneca ad =  
Neron. Tacit.  
Annal. lib. 14.  
cap. 14.*



OF  
PENITENTIAL  
CONFESSION.

## CHAP. I.

## The Contents.

*The names of things exemplifie their nature. The Authors purpose. Heb. נחמה signifies Repentance and consolation, which is variously rendred by the Septuagint. Heb. חירה confession or a casting off, by the same Interpreters is translated to give thanks, and to praise, Exagoreusis a forinsecal word, an indictment, Exhomologesis, Metancea and Metameleia usual in the New Testament. Resipiscence and Penitude their difference and several uses.*



AMES fitly imposed are the express images of things, and speak their nature : no better key to open the secret of any subject matter, than by being acquainted with what title it is called. Truth is a picture drawn at life, the names and titles are the several colours, representing the same unto a rational understanding. By names the

B

Creatures

Αὐτὸ ἐστὶ ἰδέ-  
αι τῆς ἀλη-  
θείας τὰτα  
ὀνόματα καὶ τὰ  
περὶ γράμματα.  
Clem. Alex.  
Strom. lib. 6.



הכרלת  
תמוכים

Non nude fuerunt appellationes, sed ex earum naturis sumptæ. Merce.

Exod. 3. 13.

(a) Generaliter significat mutationem animi seu affectû, qualis est quando aliquem dicti vel facti sui peniteat, illudque ipsum mutat, vel quæ sit condolentiâ vel commiseratione, vel quæ sit consolatione in eo qui prius perturbatus erat. Kercher. Lexicon. Hebr-Græc. verbo כרת.

Creatures are not onely made known what nature they are of, but are distinguished also, their several kinds, and specifick formes are diversly discerned. The Hebrews style the nomination of their creatures a *separation of their several species*, their *Analysis*, and distinction; there is then a twofold use of names; 1. To tell us what a thing is in it self; 2. and how differenced from another. This task was God pleased at the first to impose on *Adam*, and he had then the strength to undergo it, wherein he was not simply graced, the creature to take its *being* from God, and its *appellation* from man, by that employment would God try his skill as well pleased to behold his own wisdom reflecting from that glass. My purpose is (the Lord being my help) to treat of *penitential confession*, the originall, institution, progress, and practice thereof, also its efficacy, vertue and scope, together with the uses and abuses by such Congregations and Churches as pretend to Christianity, to endeavour to disabuse the same, and restore it to its former integrity. To inquire what authority is delegated unto man in giving audience unto Penitents; likewise what necessity lies upon sinners, and in what cases, to unfold the burthen of their Consciences unto the Lords Stewards. And lastly, what power over sin is committed to that *earthen vessel*, together with the instructions, latitude, and extent thereof, for procuring the safety of Christian souls. Wherein (as we have said) our first step into this passage and nature of Confession must be to learn the names, and appellations thereof. And as *Moses* would not stir afoot till God had told him his name, so we must arrest our thoughts in the first place, upon this inquiry.

And to begin with the first and most sacred Tongue, נחמה signifying *Repentance*, which is the root and parent of confession, (a) which word importeth usually a *change* in the mind, or *affecti*ons, when a man repenteth of what he hath spoken or done, as wishing the same unsaid, or to do again; and this *alteration* is accommodated with *grief* and *pity*, if what hath slipped from his tongue, or hands

be

be prejudicial to himself, or such as are dear unto him, or else with *consolation*, in case his former purpose proved molestious unto him, and that he hath found ease in the revoking thereof. And hence it is that the word carries with it a double signification to *repent*, and to *comfort*; for godly sorrow usually sits down in consolation, true Repentance like *Janus* with a double face, looking upon the old year or conversation lamentably; upon the new, or renewed life cheerfully. God spake as man, when he *repented that he made man*, there's the word; and *Job* in the same termes expressed that serious abnegation of himself, *wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes*. A Penitent for a time dislikes none more than himself, and would have others take notice of his vileness also by covering himself with dust, and crowning his head with ashes. The *Septuagint* have rendred the same variously, but every way significantly; as 1. Πάσω to cease, πάυσουμαι ὑπὸ τοῦ κακῶν, saith God by the Prophet, upon the peoples turning from the evil of sin, *I will cease from the evils of punishment, which I purposed to do unto them because of the evil of their doings*; so it hath, and ever will be, betwixt us and God; hand off from sin, hand off from punishment. 2. It is interpreted ἐνθυμέομαι, to ponder and consider, (and that but once) upon that former place in *Genesis*, καὶ ἐνθυμήθη ὁ Θεὸς ὅτι ἐποίησε ἄνθρωπον; and God pondered in his mind that he had made man, considering and bethinking with himself what he had done; so considerate were those Interpreters in translating thus, lest Repentance with God might have begot some misprision of him with *Ptolemy*; though otherwise they make bold to render it with words and phrases of Repentance, and that in the person of God too, when it is not of man but of the evils that might befall him. As 3. Μετανοῶ, to repent again, in *Jeremy*, *If a nation turn from the evil, μετανοῶ ὑμῶν καὶ ἡ κακία*, *I will repent of the evil I thought to do unto them*. *If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then μετανοῶ ὑμῶν καὶ ἡ ἀγαθία*, *I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them*: Here I cannot refrain from telling my Reader, how we occasion

נחם *conso-*  
lari, *penitere*.  
S. Pagnia.

Gen. 6. 6.

יָנַח  
יָהוָה  
וַתִּחַתֵּי  
עַל עַם  
זָכָר

Job 42. 6.

Jer. 26. 3.

Mala non pec-  
catoria sed ul-  
toria. Tertull.  
lib. 2. contr.  
Marcion.

Aug. [pro pe-  
nituit] legiti-  
recognitavit,  
juxta fidem  
verisissimi co-  
dicis. lib. 15.  
de Civit. Dei.  
cap. 24.

Pœnitentia Dei neque ex improvidentia, neque ex levitate, neque ex ulla boni aut mali operis damnatione reputetur, sicut humana — nihil aliud intelligitur quam simplex conversio scientiæ prioris. Tertull. lib. 2. contr. Mar-  
cion. c. 24. Jerem. 18. vers. 8. & 10.

ἰλασμομα &  
ἰλεως giro-  
μαα.

והנחם

על הרעה

לעֶד

Exod. 32. 12

והנחם

יהוה על

הרעה

Verse 14.

John 1. 46.

Gods favours, and frownes; when man turns from evil, God turns to be good in collation of benefits, and when man turns from being good, God turns to be evil in the affliction of his judgments; yea so propitious is God upon Repentance, that to repent with him is with these Translators to be pacified. In *Moses* earnest intercession for the people, (for whose sins God was justly displeased) we read according to the Original, Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people; they render it ἰλεως γενεῖ ἐπὶ τῇ κακίᾳ τοῦ λαοῦ σε, be favourable to the sins of thy people. And whereas God was intreated and *Moses* prevailed in his suit, (as what cannot fervent supplications do with God) the Hebrew verity saith, and the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto the people, and they say, καὶ ἰλάσθη Κύριος πρὸς τὴν κακίαν, God was intreated for the evil and pacified. This evidence is from the Old Testament, and oldest language for Repentance.

And what find you for the tongue and dialect thereof, Confession? I say as *Philip* to *Nathaneel*, Come and see: the Hebrew תורה in *hiphil* to Confess, is a branch of the root ירה, propitiate, to cast away; because Confession is a kind of casting up of crude sins, indigested in the conscience of a diseased stomach, and disquiet breft. A Father of great antiquity hath instructed

me to this observation, Even as those that have meat lying indigested upon the stomach, or are otherwise troubled with the phlegme, are greatly releev'd by a vomit, so those that hide their sins committed inwardly, are strangled well-nigh, and choaked with their humour and fl-gme, but if that vexed person would accuse himself, and confess, by so doing at once he vomiteth up his sin, and discovereth his

Sicut ii qui habent intus inclusam escam indigestam, aut humoris, vel phlegmatis stomacho graviter, & moleste imminantia, si vomuerint releuantur; ita etiam hi qui peccaverunt, siquidem occultant, & retinent inter se peccatum, intrinsecus urgentur, & prope modum suffocantur à phlegmate, & humore peccati, si autem ipsi sui accusator fiat, dum accusat semetipsum, & confitetur, simul evomit & delictum atque omnem morbi digerit causam. Origen, homil. 2. in Psal. 37.

And it shall be, when he shall be guilty of one of these things,

והודה

disce. So *Origen*. Thence cometh also תורה which is confession, or the sacrifice destin'd to expiate the sin revealed to the Priest, of which there is frequent mention in the old Law; where the guilty person was to confess the sin that he had sin-

and shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing, Levit. 5. Psal. 5. 6.

ned,

ned, and to present his offering. And the Priest was to make his (b) atonement, expiation or redemption; the quality of which confession, and the reserved cases therein will come under our hands hereafter; So in the inquiry after the iniquity of Achan, which put Israel to flight more than all their enemies could do: the offender attached by a divine lot; *Joshuah* advi-

feth him at no hand to conceal the sin, but to make confession thereof to

God, or as the Septuagint according to the letter of the Hebrew, give confession unto him. And the same In-

terpreters, where sin is the subject thereof, render it confession; but where God and his mercies are the contents, praise and thanksgiving; as for example, *That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works*, or as the French Bibles, for to illustrate with the voice of thanksgiving; after the Hebrew, *That I may cause to be heard, or sound forth in the voice of confession*, which the Septuagint read thus, *ὡς ἀνέσται με φωνὴς αἰνεσούσας σε*, that I may bear the voice of thy praise. But when sin bears the burthen of confession, then the words used are *ἐξομολόγῃς*, & *ἐξομολόγησιν*, which run along all their translation, and are of much use with the Greek Fathers also; sometimes they express it by *ἐξαγορεύω*, a forinsecal word, as in that former place of *Leviticus*; *ὃς ἐξαγορεύσει τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*, and shall confess his sin. After that solemn and heavy denunciation of the peoples sins unto God by the lips of *Ezra*, chap. 9. in the beginning of the next, the Septuagint read, *ὡς ἐξηγόρευσε καὶ ὡς προσευχήσεται*, after he had confessed weeping and praying.

That Priests and peoples confession could not but fly up to heaven, winged with prayers and tears: And *David's* purpose to accuse and indict himself for his offences, was according to that tenor, *ἔπα ἐξαγορεύσω καὶ ἐμὴ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν*, I said I will confess my sin against my self; where he never took his own part more, than by setting himself in such a confession against himself: wherein those Translators would shew that in confession, there must be a concurrency both in soul and body, and both must arraign us at the Bar, giving in of evidence, or rather finding of the bill of indictment by our selves put in, and signed

to

כפר (c)

*Job. 7. 19. יתן לו תודה* δὲς αὐτῷ  
τὴν ἐξομολόγησιν. *Lui fai confession.*  
Gallicè.

*Psal. 27. 7.*  
Pour esclater  
en voice d'ac-  
tion de graces.  
Fr. B.

לשמוע  
בכנול תודה  
ut audire faci-  
am sonum, in  
H. phil.  
*Psal. 26. 7.*  
Sec. LXXII.  
From ἀγορεύ-  
sonum.  
*Ezra 10. 1.*

*Pf. 31. vel 32.*  
Sec. Hebrews.

to be true, if it were onely ἀγορεύω the evidence of the tongue were enough, but ἐξαγορεύω imports that there is an inward sense of the outward evidence; and as evil springeth from the heart, so from that root must orall confession issue forth: and hence is it that one of the Fathers calls it, 1. *The confession of the conscience*: 2. *Another, the exposing of the burden of the soul*, 3. and a third, *a sighing forth of sin, rather than speaking*, and with grief of heart, more than words of the lips. Thus far the Old Testament hath led me by the hand along the several denominations of Repentance and Confession.

And now for to come unto that other part of Gods treasure, (for so *Clemens Alexand.* honours the Scriptures) let us see what a good *Scribe* may bring forth of the *New* also: We shall there find for Repentance two words, μετάνοια & μετάνεμα, the former hath respect unto the *mind*, and the change thereof, rather

than any corporal afflictions; when after a lapse the party peccant shall find his error, and so seriously to lament that former error as to correct and amend the same; considering *what he was* with grief, and endeavouring to be what he was not, therefore it hath reference to the inward man, and importeth not so much the confession of sin, as the commutation of the mind, whereby the sinner is altered, rather than the sin uttered, as *Tertullian* elegantly expressed the force of the Greek word; and in that name is comprised Repentance, with its properties and virtues; so you have the *fruits of repentance*, *Mat. 3. 8.* and the *calling of sinners to repentance*, *Mat. 9. 13.* and *forgiveness of sins* annexed

1. Exhomologesis conscientie.  
Cyprian.  
2. pondus animi proferre.  
Aug.  
3. Ingemit culpe dolore.  
Ambr.

Μετανοῶν mutata mentem sonat, non afflictionem corporis. Erasim. annot. in Mat. cap. 3.

De errore admissio ita dolere, ut corrigas, Latine respiscere. Beza Annot. ad Matth. 3. vers. 2.

Semper μετανοία convenit  
ὁ σφερόντισμα.

(but ought to have been) with grace; that his Repentance is a departure from evil unto goodness, therefore herein is wisdom in the end; and in Latin is termed *respiscencia*, for to commit sin is folly, but to repent thereof, and amend is wisdom;

Nam & in Græco sono penitentie nomen non ex delicti confessione, sed ex animi demutatione composita est. Tertul. lib. 2. contr. Marcion. cap. 4.

Κατὰ ἀξίαν τῆς μετανοίας, *Matth. 3. 8.* ἀμαρτωλὸς εἰς μετάνοιαν, *Matth. 9. 13.* μετάνοιαν καὶ ἄρεσιν ἀμαρτιῶν, *Luc. 24.* ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ σποδῷ μετανόησαν, *Matth. 11. 21.* μετανόησατε ἔν καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε, εἰς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἀμαρτίας, *Act. 3. 19.*

annexed to *repentance*, Luke 24. 27. so you have the habit and drefs thereof, *they had repented in sackcloth and in ashes*. The virtue and effect, together with the manner and efficacy thereof; *Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out*; thus μετανοια is all in all with repentance.

The other word μεταμέλεια, is not of such vertue, and is used of such as have been remifs, and supine in managing of their affairs, who smarting for their follies, and negligence, at the last shew more diligence; such after-wits are usually anxious, and disquieted with their doings. This kind of pensiveness doth not alwayes imply a change either in

life or purpose for the better, but sometimes for the worse also, betokening rather a δυσάρεστος, and displeasure, whereby we could wish with all our hearts things done undone, hap what will, be they good or evil. *The gifts and callings of God are ἀμεταμέλιστα without repentance*, that is of that sort as the donation thereof is at no time displeasing to God, who therewith was once pleased. *The Lord swears ὅτι μεταμεληθήσεται and will not repent*, that is, will never desire to change, or dislike his deposition. The son that refused to labour in his fathers vineyard, was better than his word, he said he would not, afterwards he repented and went, and upon better thoughts altered his resolution, and obeyed: he repented upon what he said, and went upon what he resolved. Judas after his treason μεταμεληθεὶς repented likewise, as sore troubled at what he had done, and could have wished the same to have been to do again, as one swallowed up of sorrow and despair. The Apostle of his sharp letter sent to the Corinthians, *I do not repent, though I did repent*, as loth to grieve them; so he repented that they should look sad at any lines of his; yet he repented not, because they sorrowed after a godly manner. I have been the more particular in these instances, that the difference betwixt these two, μετανοια, which a learned Interpreter alwayes translates *Resipiscence*, and μεταμέλεια in like manner alwayes by him rendred *Pœnitence*, might shine the clearer, and it stands in two points, 1. in their properties and conditions, the one being a sober discerning of what was

formerly

Dicta est cum socordes in peragendo sero incipimus esse attentī. Erasmi.

Declarat post rem aliquam factam sollicitum esse & anxium, Latine pœnitere, atque usurpari potest in vitio. Beza.

Heb. 7. 21.

μεταμεληθεὶς ἀπὸ πλθς.

Matth. 21. 29.

Tristitiam significans à qua est absorptus.

μεταμέλομαι, ἢ ὅτι μεταμελόμην.

Beza.



formerly amiss, wisely correcting and amending the same, or an alteration wrought in the heart upon sounder advise, and a reformation of precedent faults; whereas the other [*Metamelia*] oftentimes intimateth no more, than a meer vexation, causing trouble, and anxiety of mind at things past help, or a displeasure, and distrust onely, joyned with little or no amendment. 2. The other difference lies in the *object*; *Metanœa* is only for reformation, altering what was fit to be altered, and grieving for what was worthy to be lamented; whereas *Metamelia* is sometimes a fretting that evil designs succeed not, as *Pharaoh* repined that he let *Israel* go, and resolved to cross their passage to his own ruine; Therefore when this Repentance is attributed to God and men, and they both good and bad, this distinction must be observed; 1. when God is said to repent (as in making of *Saul* King) the change is in the outward act, not in Gods internal will, viz. in the dethroning of that worthless Prince: 2. when good men repent, the change is in the affections, and in the actions also: 3. but the wicked are no changlings, grieving sometimes that their mischievous plots take no place, and at other times swallowed up in grief, that they have been so mischievous.

Other words there are in the New Testament for Confession, coincident with those used by LXXII. Interpreters in the Old, whose Translation is by the Evangelists and Apostles generally imbraced; as *ὁμολογῆν*, I *John* 1. 9. and *ἐξομολογῆν*, *Mat.* 3. 6. *Mark* 1. 6. *Acts* 19. 18. I chuse to direct to the places onely, having formerly spoken all I know by the words already; and my care is to ease my self and my Reader all I can, from the tediousness of Tautologies and needless repetitions.

And as little remaineth to be spoken of the Latine names, *Pœnitentia* takes its beginning with *Erasmus*, à *pœnè tenendo*, because it laieth hold on good resolutions in the last; although a great master in Criticisme derives the same from *pœna*, and that from *pœniendo*, (*pœnire* with the ancient standing for *punire*) because punishment usually answers sin. To repent in the vulgar Translation is *pœnitentiam agere* for *pœnitere*, and is as ridiculously translated by our *Rhemists* to do penance; as if I should interpret *vitam agere* to do life, which I oppose not with any

*Dens vult mutationem, non mutat voluntatem.* Aquin.

Turnebus.



any purpose to cut off godly sorrow from Repentance, or those severe and wholesome exercises thereof, of much use in the Primitive times, as not ignorant that though Repentance be a conversion and turning, yet the way is *with weeping*, &c. and profess my self no great enemy to them that with a discreet hand shall chastise the body, not to keep even with God, but to keep it under, to sequester the same from sinning, rather than to satisfy for sin; according to that vulgar Epigram of *Ansonius*,

*Sum Dea que facti, non factis, exigo penas,  
Nempe ut poeniteat, sic Metancea vocor.*

And thus much for the words, and their significations, where-  
in I have not onely rested upon the naked *Etymologies*, but have respected the use, and practice thereof in holy Scripture, and live in hope to be discharged of that censure, *Bellarmino* (I know not how justly) passeth upon the Divines of the Reformation, as *Grammarians* rather then *Divines*, deriving the significations of words from *Etymologies*, rather than the common use of the holy Scriptures and good Authors.

*Errant isti Grammatici potius quam Theologi, qui vocum significationes ex Etymologia potius ducunt, quam ex communi Scripturae & bonorum Authorum usu. Bellar. l. i. de Pœn. c. 7.*

## CHAP. II.

## The Contents.

Repentance is a conversion, and wherein it consisteth; The Fathers define it from the sensible effects and signs thereof. The Schoolmens error in placing it in bodily corrections rather than in mental change. The Reformed Divines seat it in the humiliation of the heart, requiring also outward expressions of sorrow. Conversion is the essential form of Repentance. Self-abnegation, Godly sorrow, a Penitents practice and endeavour.

ἡ μὲν λέξις  
δὲ ὁ ἐστὶν ἐν  
σώματι,  
τὰ δὲ πρὸς  
μὲν αὐτὸν  
ἐστὶν, καὶ τὸ  
Clem. Alex.  
ἐστὶν αὐτὸν.  
Mat. 9. 21.

**H**itherto of the several names and appellations, now of the substance and thing it self; for words are as clothes, and rayment to the body, whereas the material substance is the nerves, and fleshy part thereof; yet as the *Hemorrhousaan* in the Gospel drew virtue from our Saviour by touching the *hem* of his garment, so no small light hath been afforded (as in part hath already appeared, and will be shewn more fully hereafter) to discover the nature of penitential confession from the habit and outside thereof; the clothes thus spread we may see more clearly into the thing it self. And so much hath been unfolded by the names wherewith Repentance is called in several languages, that the less is left behind to discover the substantial part thereof; and therein I shall make as little stay as I may, for that this consideration was not the principal matter intended, but as an apparatus, and necessary introduction thereunto. Our inquisition into the nature of Repentance shall begin with the holy Scriptures, pass along by the Fathers, divert unto the School-men, and conclude with the modern Divines of both Churches.

In Gods book Repentance is described to be a conversion and a change. In *Solomons* prayer upon the dedication of the Temple,

ple, when the people shall be smitten down before the enemy, because *1 King. 8.*  
 they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again unto thee, and *33.*  
 confess thy name, &c. there's a turning to; which implies also a *איך יחליו*  
 turning from, and that follows in the verse following, *אם יחליו*. *Aristot.*  
*confess thy name, and turn from their sin.* The termes then *verse 35.*  
 in this conversion *תו אפ' י* is from sin, and thence there is a  
 departure; *תו אפ' י* is to God, and thither there must be an ad-  
 venture. Upon good advice then the Hebrew *שׁוּב* to turn, is  
 by Interpreters turned to repent, especially where the same is  
 doubled in the Original, as in *Ezekiel, Repent and turn from all*  
*your transgressions, Chap. 18. 30. and Chap. 14. 6. return,*  
*and turn ye from,* as the French read it. I could be infinite (if  
 occasion were) in such particulars. *Can the Ethiopian change*  
*his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that*  
*are accustomed to do evil;* inimating that Repentance is no natu-  
 ral work, that sins set on by custome adhere as close unto the  
 soul, as blackness to the skin of the *Ethiopian*, or spots unto  
 the *Leopard*; that the *blackness*, and those *spots* are changed by  
 doing good instead of evil, and that change to be wrought up-  
 on Repentance. The same Scripture sets this *Conversion* in the  
 heart, shewing that it ariseth from a sense of Gods judgments,  
 and a detestation of sin, accompanied with a godly sorrow for  
 the same; grounded upon a just displeasure a sinner takes unto  
 himself for displeasing God, joyned ever with holy vows, flui-  
 dies, and endeavours of amendment of life; Thus much from the  
 Scriptures.

For the *Fathers* their descriptions are usually taken from the  
 effect, and operation of Repentance; as that of *Ambrose,*  
*Repentance is to bewail sins already*  
*committed, and not to commit again*  
*sins already bewailed, consisting in a*  
*contrition for sin, and a dereliction*  
*thereof, where indeed what a peni-*  
*tent turneth from, and leaveth, is expressed, but not to what*  
*he is to lean, and turn unto; the Master of the sentences some-*  
*what supplies this defect, that it is a virtue whereby we lament,*

*Est virtus qua commissa mala cum emendatione*  
*nis proposito plangimus & odimus, & plangenda ulterius committere nolumus. Lomb.*  
*Est dolor de peccato commisso cum emendationis proposito, Aquin.*

שוב

והשיב

Restournex

vous &amp; vœux

desournex.

Fr. Bible.

Jerem. 13. 23.

Acts 17. 30.

2 Cor. 7. 10.

Marth. 3.

*Præterita mala plangere, & plangenda ire-*  
*rum non committere. Ambr.*

*Antea facta peccata flere; & flenda non commi-*  
*tere. Greg.*

*Est virtus qua*  
*commissa mala*  
*cum emendatio-*

*Est quedam  
dolentis vindi-  
ctæ, semper pu-  
nicus in se,  
quod dolet com-  
misisse. Aug. lib.  
de vinc. pœn.  
Etiam in bonis  
factis adhibent.  
Terr. lib. de  
pœn. c. 1.*

and hate the sins that we have done, with a purpose of amendment, as not with our wills to commit what we have lamented; which *Aquinas* hath contracted thus, it is a grief for sins past, with a purpose of amendment. But that ascribed to Saint *Austin*, viz. that it is a kind of revenge alwayes punishing in himself, what a sinner grieves to have committed, hath respect unto the exercise, and consequent of Repentance, rather than to the virtue it self. They all concur that Repentance is a grieving for sin, inso- much that the *Ethnick* is taxed by *Tertullian*, for calling that Repentance, wherein the doing of a good turn is grieved at, as spilt upon a thankless breast, or otherwise cast away; where he desireth to be understood of *Medicinal* and saving Repen- tance, otherwise he will fall under the lash of his own pen, himself censuring in *Marcion*, what he approved against the *Ethnick*, and approving against *Marcion* what he censured in the *Ethnick*; for he allows not that the subject of repentance should be onely evil, nor that every sorrow should be ground- ed upon a reall error, or alwayes argue something amiss; for many times courtesies, and bene- fits are repented of by the *Donours*, as extended to such as deserve not the same, importing rather ingratitude in the *Donor*, than any offence in the *Benefactor*; therefore to reconcile him to himself, interpret him to speak of *criminal* Repentance onely, which ever respecteth sin the chief motive of godly sorrow.

*Penitentiam pravè interpretatur (Marcion)  
confessionem scilicet sapere mali operis alicujus,  
vel erroris; porro non semper, evenit enim in  
bonis factis penitentia confessio ad invidiam, &  
exprobationem ejus qui beneficii ingratus exti-  
terit. Terr. lib. 2. cont. Marcion. c. 24.*

*Penitentia* <sup>invidiosa.</sup>  
<sup>criminosa.</sup>

*Definitio peni-  
tentia data est  
per causam,  
non per essenti-  
am. Compend.  
Theol. verit.  
1. 6. c. 29.*

(a) *In iis, quæ  
corporis magis  
exercitationem,  
quàm animi  
emendationem  
in se continent, collocata.*

All which descriptions of the *Ancients*, comprehending rather the consequents and effects of Repentance, than the precise form thereof, occasion the *Schoolmen* to let go the sub- stance for the shadow; who in their disputes are so fettered to the external practice, and fruit of repentance, that no other collection can be made from their Treatises, and determinati- ons, than that (a) Repentance is a harsh kind of discipline, and austerit, carrying a rigid hand upon the fleshly part of man his body, thereby to tame the same to subjection, or to chastise it for former insurrections; a discipline not amiss, if

*H. Grotius de Relig. Christ. l. 6. sub initio.*

the mind, and inward man might be renewed also; which ever implieth a due correction, and amendment of life; but of this inward reformation *ne yēs quidem*, there is a strange silence, you shall not lightly meet with a syllable thereof in all their voluminous Treatises. It is not a shirt of hair, a Lenten suit, a dejected countenance, that can please God, without a true humiliation of the heart; nor the outward habit of *John the Baptist*, without his inward virtues. Be not deceived, God is not mocked with all *sackcloth* without, and all *purple* within. The Divines of the Reformation espying this defect of the inward sap, and marrow of Repentance, consisting in the rending, and renewing of the heart, have stood much upon, and urged repentance of this kind; as a work of grace arising of a godly sorrow, whereby a man turns from all his sins to God, and brings forth fruit worthy of amendment of life: *Or a true conversion of our life to God, proceeding from a true fear of him, and contained in the mortifying of the old man the flesh, and in the quickning of the spirit.* Nor have they stayed here, but have called on for the fruits, and exercises thereof, professing the end, and scope of repentance to be the restitution of Gods image decayed in us; have enjoined the offices of piety to God, and of charity towards man; That penitent sinners are trees of Righteousness, of Gods own planting, growing by the *waters that flow out of the Sanctuary*, and therefore must bear fruit, that may serve for meat, and leaf for medicine. Behold then the subtilty of *Satan*, and iniquity of these times, perswading many to have inward Repentance, and grief in the heart, without any external exercise or fruit, whereas the tree is known to be good by the fruit it beareth. 'Tis true, bodily exercise upon the flesh, where the spirit, and inward grace of Contrition is wanting, profiteth nothing; yet if true sorrow be planted in the

*In externis exercitiis mordens infixi—  
de interiori mentis reformatione mirum silen-  
tium.* Calvin. Instit. 1.3. c.4. Sect. 1.

Repentance  
what, and  
wherein the  
truth thereof  
consisteth.

*Est vera ad Deum vite nostre conversio à  
sincero serioq; Dei amore profecta, quæ carnis  
nostre, veteris hominis mortificatione, &  
Spiritus vivificatione constat.* Calvin. Inst.  
1. 3. c. 3. quem sequitur Zanch. loc. com. de  
Pœnit.

*Officia pietatis erga Deum, charitatis erga ho-  
mines — externa testimonia quæ sinceram  
resipiscantiam commendant.* Calvin.

Es. 6. 3.

Ezek. 47. 12.

the heart, it will break forth in the eye with tears, and tongue with confession. Consider how unsuitable it is to cut off all bodily Repentance for sins done in the body, as thou hast given thy members to the one, so give them to the other also. Thus have I opened (so far as is necessary) the doctrine of Repentance, and shall dismiss the same with certain conclusions.

**Conclus. 1.**

Acts 26. 20.

*The very nature and essence of Repentance consists in turning.* The first text that Saint Paul preached on to the Gentiles after his own conversion, was, *that they should repent, and turn to God, and do Works meet for Repentance*; the summe and drift of Repentance being to pass from our selves to God: which conversion is not a substantial change, altering the *subject*, but an alteration in the *qualities* of the Converts soul, changing them from

Ὅτιον τὸ σῶμα ὑγιαίνει καὶ πάλιν κἀμνη, κατεμένον γὰρ ταῦτο καὶ ὁ χαλκὸς σεργύλλος ὅτε καὶ γονεὶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος γὰρ ὦν. *Arist. de gener. & corrup. l. 1. text. 23.*

καὶ πάλιν  
καὶ τὸ ποῖον  
ἀλλοίωσις.  
*Id. ib.*

Ezek. 18. 31.  
Jer. 4. 1, 3, 4.

evil to good; as for example, the same body now in health, now diseased, where the substance is the same, but not the state; or as the same metal wrought in an angular or circular figure, *materially* the same,

though not *formally*. In repentance then the *substance* is not changed, as in generation and corruption, nor the *quantity*, as in growth and diminution, but in *qualities* and *conditions* onely; a transformation of the inward man, therefore called a *new heart*; and described by returning unto the Lord, putting away abominations out of his sight; by breaking up of fallow ground; and circumcising the fore-skins of the heart, wherein lies the amendment, and alteration.

**Conclus. 2.**

Peccati odium  
penitentiae ex-  
ordium —  
illum arbitror  
plurimum pro-  
fecisse, qui sibi  
plurimum dis-  
plicere didicit.  
Calvin.

**Conclus. 3.**

*A Penitent upon the sense of his sins and Gods judgments, becomes a person much dejected, as David and Peter, and thereupon grows into a great dislike with himself, wishing he were another man; and as the beginning of Repentance proceedeth from the hatred of sin, so doth the hatred of sin spring from the fear of God, and that penitent hath made a fair progress in Repentance, which hath truly learned with himself to be highly displeased.*

*Contrition in a true Penitent is a godly sorrow for sin, and for incurring Gods displeasure: Grief for sin is, where the sin is more abhorred than the punishment; that if there were no*  
*Conscience*



Conscience to accuse, no Devil to terrifie, no Judge to arraign and condemn, no hell to torment, yet to be humbled for all that for sin, and brought upon our knees for offending such a God; and that sin should be the more displeasing to us for that it is unto Him displeasing. There was in the heart of *Anselmus* such a detestation of sin, as to profess, that if the horror of sin on the one side, and terror of hell on the other, were so proposed, as one of them (chuse which he would) must needs be undergone by him, that he would prefer the torments to suffer there, before the filthiness of sin to be unclean here; and that in his option and choice, he had rather descend into hell an innocent, and undefiled, than to ascend into heaven with guilt and uncleanness; such hearts, and holy resolves, God send us.

A Penitent endeavour eth by all wayes and means possible to appease the wrath of God, to make his atonement for the obtaining of mercy, by faith in *Christ*, and the efficacy of his merits; by humility of heart, by confession and acknowledgment of the offence; by promises of amendment, and by frequenting the best remedies against sin; supporting himself in all his anguishes, and afflictions, and though he have fallen among thieves, be stripped of his rayment and wounded, yet he is not quite dead, gasping for relief, and anchoring himself upon the coming of the good Samaritan; his soul is a wounded spirit indeed, but wounded & θανάσιμος, ἀλλὰ σωτήριος, as a father speaketh, not to death, but so as may be healed. This expectation of pardon and reconciliation differenceth the godly sorrow of true Converts, from the gulph of grief, and desperation of forlorn Miscreants, such as were *Cain* and *Judas*, men swallowed up of sorrow, without the least beam of comfort. *Judas* went the wrong way in confessing his sins unto the Jewish Priests and not unto God. I suppose (saith *Ambrose*) that if that Confession had been directed unto *Christ*, he might have found

Si hinc peccati horrorem, hinc inferni dolorem corporaliter cernebat, & necessarium unum corum immergi deberet, prius infernum quam peccatum appeteret. Malle se purum à peccato, & innocentem Gehennam habere, quam peccati sordibus pollutum calorum regna tenere. Eadem, vita Anselm. lib. 2.

Luke 10. 30.  
Clem. Alex.  
pæd. lib. 1. pag. 89.

Arbitror quod etiam Judas potuisset & tantum Dei misericordiam non excludi à venia, si penitentiam non apud Judæos, sed apud Christum

egisset. 1. 2. de poen. c. 5. Hoc auferre vultis [Novatiani], propter quod agitur penitentia; tolle Gubernatoris perveniendi spem, & in mediis fluctibus incertus errabit; tolle luctatori coronam, latus jacebit in stadio. Bonum Dominum habemus qui velit donare omnibus. Ambr. lib. 2. de poenit. cap. 3.

mercy;



mercy; hope of mercy is the onely encouragement to Repentance; without this Anchor the Pilot and his ship are tossed incertainly with winds, and waves; take away this laurel, the Champion will languish upon the theatre. But a good Lord we have that will forgive all, and to all that seek him, saith the glory of Millaine. And in this last Conclusion we have news of Confession, which is a good means to obtain mercy and forgiveness, to which we hasten.

### CHAP. III.

#### The Contents.

Discipline of Penance wherefore injoyed by the Church. Exhomologesis, divers kinds of Confession, Publick penance of Apostolical practice. The austerity thereof in the Primitive times. Order thereof prescribed in the dayes of Cyprian and Ambrose. Divers examples of publick Penitents. The solemn Practique thereof in Records of the Church. Sinners admitted but once to solemn Penance. Actual reconciliation denied by the Church to lapsed sinners. No renewing unto repentance, how understood in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Four stations observed by the ancient Penitents. The restoring of this discipline much desired.

**I** Have touched in the former passages how Repentance began to be placed in the exercises, and practick part thereof, as the subduing of the body with austerity of food, and rayment; by which external means *Man* rather came to the notice of our sorrow, than *God*; for the Almighty as he is the searcher of the reins, and heart, hath an eye principally upon those inward parts to see how they stand affected: I say, because

because God can make a scrutiny into the spirit of man onely, it was thought fit by the *Church*, (which is a select company of men, and understand as man) to prescribe unto sinners such rules to be observed in Repentance, whereby the same might appear to be real and sincere unto them also: for if the *Church* have any power (as sure she hath) in the reconciliation of Penitents, there must needs be some such means supposed as are proportionable to the Churches apprehension, whereby inward contrition for sin may be unto them demonstrated, and forthwith the party to be reconciled. But grief of heart cannot be made known unto man without some sensible sign; therefore as Saint *James* called upon the professors, *shew me thy faith by thy works*; so did the ancient *Disciplinarians*, shew us your Repentance by the fruit thereof. Now this evidence, and demonstration consisted in the undergoing of an outward humiliation, according to the *Penitential Canons* then in force; of which discipline there were several degrees, according to the nature of the offence, and this the *Ancients* called *Exhomologesis*: for as in the Primitive times they onely were named *Penitents* that underwent the publick prescript thereof; so publick penance was comprehended under that title as the *ministerial* part thereof; for what was it else but a publick *manifesto*, and declaration of sin, joyned with a submission to open Penance and shame? Infomuch that the *Jesuits* themselves confess that *Exhomologesis* is a word of such latitude,

James 2. 18.

Nomine Penitentium apud veteres, soli publici penitentes intelligi solebant. Bell. l. 2. de poenit. c. 14. p. 1403. Ministerium ejus. Tertul.

and use with the old *Doctors*, as to comprehend contrition, and satisfaction, as well as vocal Confession onely; and expressly that *Cyprian* thereby meant not that, which they terme Sacramental. Upon good ground then *Erasmus* first, and after him *Chemnitius* have observed, how divers *Divines* not advisedly considering what the old *Doctors* say, are deceived, or else have a purpose to deceive in their allegations; for what the *Fathers* speak of a general, and open *Exhomologesis*, that they wrest by and by, to a secret, and sionis ea transferunt, & tribuunt auriculari sue enumerationi. Chemnif. exam.

Apud veteres nomine Exhomologesis interdum non intelligitur sola Confessio, sed etiam contritio & satisfactio. Bel. de poen. l. 2. c. 5.

Exhomologesis apud Cyprian. sacramentalem (ut vocant) confessionem non significat; D. Petavius animadvers. ad Epiphanium. her. 49. p. 233.

Pontificii que propria sunt hujus confessionis.

part. 2. p. 187.

D

privy

con- } laudis.  
fes- }  
sio } fraudis.

Aug. hom. 8.

sup. verb.

huius.

*Psal.* 30. 4.

ἐξομολογείσθε

τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς

ἀγιοσύνης

αὐτοῦ. *Psal.* 103. 5.

στὸ τοῦ ἐν ἐν

χαεῖς αἱ, ἡ

γὰρ ἐξομολό-

γησις ἐστὶν αὐ-

θα ἀντὶ ἐνχα-

ριστίας λαμ-

βάνειαι. *Bas-*

*il.* in *Psal.*

29. p. 80.

privity kind of confession, as it is now used in the Church of Rome; To cut off all ambiguities, we shall therefore in a table both for brevity and perspicuity represent the several kinds and uses of Confession, by which draught the Reader may be instructed to what head and place such testimonies produced by such Divines may be justly referred.

*Exhomologesis* then is a confession of *land*, and *thanksgiving* as well as of *fraud*, and *iniquity*; and so *Basil* upon *Psal.* 29 as the LXXII number it, *Give thanks unto the memorial of his holiness.* Confess, that is to say, give thanks, for confession there is taken for giving of thanks. This kind of confession is much to the purpose, but not to the present; that of *fraud* and *sin* being most proper to a penitent, as a recognition of his own unworthiness, the draught, and Synopsis thereof behold in this digramma:

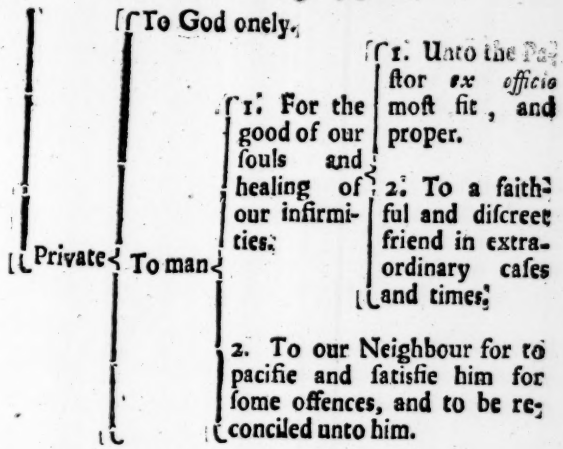
Confession  
of sin is

{ publick, in the face,  
and open assembly  
of the Church, & is

{ 1. Of the whole Church. } Ordinary, in every sacred meeting.  
Extraordinary, for some national sin, or judgment.

{ 2. Of one particular member } fallen into notorious and scandalous sins, and smitten with the censure of the Church, who is publickly to confess the same with much sorrow, and affliction; humbly deprecating for the same, and desiring his state, and reconciliation, as the *Corinthians*.

Private



This is the *ἡγομενία*, and order to be observed in the ensuing discourse.

**Public** Penance hath bordered upon the Apostles times, yea, imposed by them. When a *Christian Gentile* at Corinth had fallen into that foul sin, which a *Heathen Gentile* would have shuddered and blush'd at, viz. *Incest* with his Step-mother; the Apostle held it fit to proceed against such an offender, to deliver him to Satan, i. e. to exclude him from the communion of the faithful, and put him out of that corporation. The fact was evident, the sin was scandalous, (for he kept her as his wife) therefore must the punishment be publick also; and that penance was for the destruction of the flesh, that Satan should afflict his body, as he did Job. Paul's will was, that the flesh being the sink of lust, should thereby be tamed, and humbled; that sorrow and shame might teach him better manners. This censure was put in execution according to his directions in the first Epistle. Now after some time and good experience of his contrition, and tears, the Apostle writes again in his second Epistle.

*Tradidit Satanæ;*  
i. e. *ius civis*  
*tatis amittere.*

*Omnes crimen sciebant, publicè enim noverant suam loco uxoris habebat; in qua re neq. testibus opus erat, neque tergiversatione aliqua regi poterat crimen. Ambr. on 1 Cor. 5. ἵνα νόσος αὐτοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς. Chrysost. ut pudore & tristitia sapere discat.*

file, therein approving of his punishment so solemnly imposed, and undertaken for sufficient, and acquaints the Church there, that he was not yielded over for good and all to Satan, but

Οὐκ ἔπεν ἐκδῆναι τὸ τοῦτον πρὸς Σατανᾶν  
ἀλλὰ παρδιδῆναι, ἀνάγων ὑπὸ τῆς με-  
τανοίας τὰς θύρας, καὶ ὡς πρὸς παιδαγωγ-  
γῶν τὸ τοῦτον παρδιδῆς. *Chrys. in*  
*1 Cor. 5.*

delivered for a season; that he had  
lyen long enough under that hard  
Schoolmasters hands, and given good  
proof of his Repentance; that as in  
the censure he set open the door to  
repentance, so upon his repentance  
the door for mercy also: then he re-

*Christi nomine*  
*ac vice. Ambr.*  
Ὡς ἀντιπρὸς-  
σωπῶ ὦν ἐ-  
κείνη. *Theo-*  
*phyl.*

leaseeth him of the interdict, and restores him to the society of  
the Beleevors. *To whom you forgive, I also, and that in the per-*  
*son of Christ, q. d. I with you, and Christ with me; you for-*  
*give, and I as the Lieutenant of Christ, and his Deputy, approve*  
*the same: Where Paul the principal Judge representing our*  
*Saviours person in the sentence, and absolution, yet called the*  
*Church at Corinth as his assistants in both.*

*Clemens Romanus* in his Epistle to the same *Corinthians* lately  
published out of an ancient copy sent from the *Levant*, admo-  
nisseth the authors of sedition (which that Apostolical man  
justly esteemed for a very heinous offence) to come in and

Ἵπὲρ ἄλλης τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις, καὶ παιδεύ-  
θης εἰς μελάνοιαν καμψοῦντας τὰ γόνα-  
τα τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν.— ἄμεινον γὰρ  
ἔστιν ὑμῖν ἐν τῷ ποιμνίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μικρὰς,  
καὶ ἐλλογίμους εὐρεθῆναι, ἢ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν  
δοκῦντας ἐκείρῃναι ἐκ τῆς ἐλπίδος  
αὐτοῦ. *Clem. Ep. ad Corinth. l. i. pag.*  
*71, 72. Oxonia edit. an. 1632. à V. C.*  
*Patrissio Junio, Regia Majestati à*  
*Biblioth.*

subject themselves to their Priests,  
καὶ εἰς μελάνοιαν παιδευθῆναι, which  
the learned publisher interpreteth *to*  
*be instructed in repentance, somewhat*  
*too coldly, for to be disciplin'd unto*  
*repentance, understanding thereby*  
*publick penance. Also therein seem-*  
*eth to be mention of the place, and*  
*station wherein such Penitents were*  
*ranked: for it is much better (saith*  
*he) to be found little in the fold of*  
*Christ, and of good estimation, than*

*seeming great in their own eyes to be cast off from the hope of him;*  
where instead of the latter words, ἐκ τῆς ἐλπίδος, is placed by  
that famous man ἔξω τῆς κυρκλίδος, or ἐκ παυλίδος, extra cancel-  
los, without the bars and bounds of Christs congregation, where  
the penitents abode. That discipline, and bending of the knees  
there.

thereunto, that mean place in Christs fold, and those *cancels* are apparent footsteps of solemn penance practised in the Church, upon the reconciliation of publick and notorious offenders.

And I believe it the rather, because

*Tertullian* saith expressly it was à Deo instituta, had no meaner an Author than God himselfe; whereof his learned *Refiner* hath taken special notice. He then must be heard next of

this matter; A man of great spirit, and parts, sharpened by *Tertul.* nature, or the age he lived in, unto much severity; with whom the administration of this publick penance was expressed by the greek *Exomologesis*, which he calleth the very act, or deed doing thereof, as a probation, and approbation of cordial

sorrow: there n open confession was made of the sin to God, not as to one ignorant thereof, but to prepare the penitent so, as to satisfy the Church, whose profession he had wronged, and by that confession might be brought forth such repentance as God might be appeased. The drift and

end of that abject humiliation in the penitent, being to incline God to mercy; the manner of that dejected carriage is punctually described, the habit sack-cloth and ashes, joyned with a neglect, or rather a careless debasing, and slubbering of the body, carrying a stricter hand thereupon as the Organ and vessel of sin, although there is required a heavy soul also. The food and diet thin, bread and water,

without any other mixture, or compositions, to preserve the soul alive in the body onely; adding unto fasting; prayer; to prayer, tears; to tears, sighes and groaning; to fall down at the Priests feet; to kneel before God: Dearest, (so

the best Criticks read, and maintain the reading) that all the Brethren might joyn With them in prayer to mediate on thir behalf: all this is done to set forth repentance; to judge ourselves; that we may not be judged, to be thus severe, that God

might

*Pecator restituendo sibi à Deo institutam exomologesi sciens. Tert. de pen. c. 12. & Rhe-nanus note. Tradit à Domino institutum istum paenitentiae actum, & paenitentiae ministerium a.*

*Probatio est ut non solum conscientia praefatur, sed aliquo etiam actu adimpletur. cap. 9. Quatenus satisfactio confessione disponitur, confessione paenitentia nascitur, penitenti à Deus mitigatur. ib.*

*Sacco & cinere incubare, Corpus sordibus obscurare, animum maioribus deicere.*

*Fastum & potum pura nosse, non ventris scilicet, sed anime causâ, — jejunii preces alere, ingemiscere, lacrimari, mugire, Presbyteris advolvi, & charis Dei adgeniculari; omnibus fratribus legationes deprecationis sua iungere.*



*Cum procolvit hominem, magis relevat; cum squalidum facit, magis mundatum reddit; cum accusat, excusat; cum condemnat, absolvit.*

might be remis; and the property of this discipline is, by casting down to extoll, by fallying to purge, by accusing to excuse, by condemning to absolve, and by not sparing, to procure God to spare us. This publication of our selves contrary to the ingenit pride of nature, kept back many (even in his dayes when worldly respects were less set by) and the ensuing shame, from the performance of this duty; of whom he complaineth, that they preserved worldly credit before heavenly safety; not unlike to such that being diseased in those members (the very naming whereof modesty hath lockt

*Pudoris magis memores quam salutis, velut illi qui in partibus verecundioribus corporis contracta vexatione, conscientiam Medentium vitant, & ita cum erubescencia sua pereunt.*

*Non potest corpus de unius membri vexatione letum agere, condoleat universum, & ad remedium conlaboret, necesse est.*

up in silence) chuse rather bashfully to perish, than to present them to be cured to the Chirurgions hands. The Father removes this unseasonable shame, which were better placed before sin, than after; adding that the spectators in this act are his fellow members of the same body; and what member will triumph to see another grieved and in misery? especially in such a body where Christ is the head, who feels in heaven, and cries out when his members are kickt at by persecutors below. Therefore when hold is laid by doleful sinners of the Brethrens knees (b) (and) knees are the Altars where suppliants offer up their requests for grace, and pity) *Christ is taken hold of, Christ is intreated, Christ is a patient on the Penitents behalf*, bemoaning his sorrows, putting his tears into his bottle, recording all his sighs in his book, binding up his wounds, and

*cum te ad fratrum genua protendas, Christum contrectas, Christum exoras, Christus patitur. (b) Hec supplices attingunt, ad hec manus tendunt, hec ut aras adorant. Plin. hist. l. ii. c. 45. λαβών ἑλίσσας γέρον. Homer. iliad. l. 5.*

*An melius est damnatum latere, quam palam absolvi? In asperitudine sacci & horrore cineris, & oris de jejuno.*

pouring the oyl and wine of consolation into them; tread in this case all shame under foot, and prefer open absolution before secret guilt: And though our bodies are for the time besmear'd with dust, and wrapp'd with hair-cloth, though our visages be pale, and lurid with fasting; our hair dischiveld, not platted, nor crisped; and no fucus, no frication applied to revive a decayed complexion; the foul Christs spouse never appears in a better dress, nor more lovely chaste to her husband, than when the



the body is less adorned. Surely the tinkling ornaments, and caules, the round tires like the moon, the changeable suits of apparel, the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and hoods, and veiles, are very unmeet furniture for repentance; even Tyre it self (had the means been offered) had laid aside the Tyrian robe, for sack-cloth, and ashes. This was the discipline up in Tertullians days, which is the ministry, and act, or exercise of Repentance, rather than the virtue it self.

After the Master let his Scholar take place, Saint Cy-

prian, with whom the conversation of a Penitent is thus expressed; He must (saith he) be very intent upon prayers, and supplications, passing away the day in heaviness, the night in watching and weeping; lie prostrate he must upon the ground, be spread with ashes, rolling in sack-cloth and mire; he must away with no garment having lost that of Christs; preferring fasting, having fed upon the Devils dish; and be employed upon good works, by which sins

are cleansed; and given to alms-deeds whereby souls are delivered from death. See (Christian Reader) the strictness of those times; how hardly sinners were taxed. True Converts stuck not at such penances to purchase Gods favour, the loss whereof they held dearer than their lives, and for whose sake they shed blood as well as tears: marvel not at the rigid Penitents of that age which was so pregnant of faithful Martyrs, and let not those passages trouble thee, viz. Good works cleanse from sin, that is they sanctifie (not justify) the doers; and purge out sin (c) as one contrary doth another; and almes deliver from death, that is, God delivereth from death such as are rich in almes, and good works: far be it from this B. Martyr to intitle good works of what kind soever, to the virtue of that blood which only ran in our Saviours veins. Now the order observed in this discipline may be collected from a passage in the same Father, blaming the preposterous reconciliation of some where the same was omitted; thus;

Es. 3. 18, 19, 20  
Num ergo in  
coccino & Ty-  
rio pro delictis  
supplicare nos  
convenit?  
Penitentiam,  
& ministeri-  
um ejus exomo-  
logesin.  
Cyprian.

Orare oportet impensius & rogare, diem lectu transgere, vigiliis noctes & stictibus ducere, — stratos solo adherere cineri, in cilicio volutari & sordibus; post indumentum Christi perditum, nullum jam velle vestitum; post Diaboli cibum malle jejunium; iustis operibus incumbere, quibus peccata purgantur; Eleemosynis frequenter insistere, quibus a morte anime liberantur. Cyprian.

(c) ἐναντίον  
τοῦ ἐναντίου  
καταλύει.  
Chm. Al.  
Peccata bonis  
operibus pur-  
gantur, quia  
contrario habi-  
tu expellun-  
tur.  
El elemosyne  
non liberant a  
morte, sed in  
ipsis Eleemo-  
synis Deus.  
Hostiens.

The

Nondum penitentia facta, nondum exomologesi finita, nondum manu eis ab Episcopo & Clero imposita, Eucharistia illis datur. Cyp. lib. 3. Epist. 14.

this they are admitted to the Eucharist. The order then as B. Rhenanus collects was in this manner; First, the penitents resorted to the Priests, and made their sins known unto them.

Discimus hunc olim in Ecclesia servatum ordinem, ut 1. fieret confessio criminum apud sacerdotes Dei. 2. hanc sequebatur Penitentia (que & precefferat.) 3. Penitentiam excipiebat exomologesis. 4. quam subsequabatur impositio manus Episcopi ac Cleri: hac facta, dabatur Eucharistia, & sic reconciliatio. B. Rhen. annotat. ad Tertul. de Pœnit.

The penance as yet not performed, the publick confession not perfected, the hands of the Bishop and Clergie not being imposed upon them, and for all this they are admitted to the Eucharist. 2. Then was their penance prescribed. 3. Next the publick denunciation of their offences in the face of the assembly. 4. Afterwards their reconciliation by imposition of hands from the Bishop, and the Clergie, and their admittance to participate of the blessed Sacrament.

Basil. M.

Saint Basil writing upon those words of the Psalme, *He loveth mercy and justice*, demonstrateth how God is inclined to both of these virtues, that all his acts are mixt and composed of them both, and how he practiseth the one upon Penitent, the other upon obdurate sinners; and withall describeth the behaviour and carriage of a Penitent to obtain mercy. If God shall find thee humble and bruised for thy sin; there's the inward contrition of a wounded heart, the first and principal ingredient in this Medicinal Penance; lamenting very much, and bewailing thy evil works, there's *παρόκλαυσις* howling and weeping, the expressions of inward sorrow; Publishing with-  
τῶις πονηροῖς out shame the things that were done in secret; there's *Exhomologesis*, solemn and open Confession; petitioning the Brethren to further, and labour thy safety and recovery; there's supplication to make the Church thy advocate; and when he shall behold thee thou wholly miserable, and pensive, he will confer upon thee his abundant mercy; there's the Penitents reconciliation, and absolution; there go then inward grief, outward sorrow, open confession, humble supplication, all these fore-runners unto mercy, and reconciliation.

Ἐὰν εὐρήσῃ σε καὶ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ταπίνων, συντελειώμενον.

Πολλὰ μετὰ κλαύσουλα ἐπὶ τοῖς πονηροῖς ἔργοις.

Τὰ γινόμενα περὶ ἀνέπαιχτος σου πλουσίως.

Δείθεντα ἀδελφῶν σου καμῶν σοι.

πρὸς τὴν ἰάσιν. Ὅπως ἐλπίονόν σε γινόμενον ἐὰν ἴδῃ, ἀφ' οὗτο ἑαυτῷ ἐλεημοσύνην ἐπιχορήγει.

Basil. in Ps. 32, sub fins. gr. pag. 84. Basilica. An. Dom.

1551.

In

In *Ambrose* you shall meet with frequent mention of *Ambrose's* this Discipline, especially where repentance is his theme.

*If a man have sinned secretly, and shall for Christ's sake have undergone penance, what ben fit reapeth he if not restored to the communion of Saints? my desire is the guilty person hope well, intreat for his state with weeping, with sighing, with the tears of the people; that he become a suiter for pardon, and although his request be once and again deferred, let him imagine he hath been too remiss and cold in his prayers, and forthwith enlarge his tears, &c. Then he tells us what penitents his eyes had seen: I have known some in their penance to have furrowed their countenance with tears; to have plowed up their eye-lids with continual weeping; to have prostrated their bodies to be trampled on by all; of so pale and fasting a visage, that they seemed to set forth the picture of death in a breathing and panting body. The same Father further addeth concerning the restrained life of such a Penitent in another p'ace thus; He must renounce the world, cut his sleep shorter than nature would, break it off with sighs, interrupt it with groanings, sequestering the time thereof unto prayer, so to live as if he were dead to all worldly affairs, to deny himself, and to be wholly changed. So great was the austerity and shame usually attending upon this discipline in his dayes, that he tells us of some frightened with the conscience of their sins, would demand penance, and upon the apprehension of the strict way thereof, would start back, and recoil from the performance; and such seem to ask penance as offenders, but would undertake no otherwise than as if they were just. 2. Some crave penance but it must be short, and they*

*Si quis occulta crimina habens, propter Christum tamen studiosè penitentiam egerit, quomodo istic repetit, si ei communio non refuatur; volo veniam reus speret, petat eam lacrimis, petat gemitibus, petat populi totius fletibus, ut ignoscatur obsecret; & cum secundo, & tertio fuit dilata ejus communio, credat remissius se supplicasse; fletus augeat, &c. — Cognovi quosdam in penitentia sulcasse vultum lacrimis, exarasse continuis fletibus genas, stravisse corpus suum calcandum omnibus, jejuno ore semper & pallido mortis speciem spiranti in corpore prætulisse. Amb. lib. 1. de pœn. c. 10.*

*Renunciandum seculo est, somno ipsi minime indulgendum quàm natura postulat, interpellandus est gemitibus, interrumpendus est suspiriis, sequestrandus orationibus, vivendum ita ut vitali huic moriamur usui: seipsum sibi homo abneget, ut totus mutetur. Id. ib. lib. 2. cap. 10.*

*Plerique peccatorum suorum conscii penitentiam petunt, & cum acceperint, publicæ supplicationis revocantur pudore; hi videntur malorum perisse penitentiam, agere bonorum effectus*

Nonnulli postunt penitentiam, ut statim sibi reddi communionem velint, bi non tam se solvere cupiunt, quàm Sacerdotem ligare. —

Alii propositâ spe agendæ penitentiæ, licentiam sibi d. linquendi propagatam putant, cum penitentia remedium peccati sit, non incitium; vulneri enim medicamentum necessarium est, non vulnus medicamentis; quia propter vulnus medicamentum quaeritur, non propter medicamentum vulnus desideratur. Ambr. l. 2. de. pæn. c. 9.

the wound, not the wound for salve; and the Medicine is required for the hurt, not the hurt for the Medicine. This good man endeavoured to arm his people against that which retarded, and took off so many from making use of this balm of Gilead, this healing penance, namely, Publick shame. Art thou loth

Hoc in Ecclesia facere fastidis, ut Deo supplices, ut patrocinium tibi ad Deum obsecrandum sanctæ Plebis requiras; ubi nihil est quod pudori esse debeat, nisi non faceri, cum Omnes simus peccatores: ubi ille laudabilior qui humilior, ille iustior qui sibi abiectionior. Id. ib. c. 10.

he seemeth to himself?

The order then observed in the undergoing of this duty may be seen in Saint Ambrose also, who exhorting us to the same, while we are in bodily health, and perfect memory, alleaging likewise how uncertain in the event late Repentance is, hath

these words; Man knoweth not if he shall take his penance, and confess unto God, and to the Priest his sins: and a little before; He that shall have done his penance, and be absolved from the bond wherewithall he was holden, and separated from the body of Christ, and shall have led a good life after Repentance, and dying after reconciliation, that man goeth to the Lord, to rest,

Nescit si possit ipsam penitentiam accipere, & confiteri Deo & Sacerdoti peccata sua, ergo qui egerit veraciter penitentiam, & solutus fuerit à ligamento quo erat constrictus, & à Christi corpore separatus; & bene post penitentiam vixerit, & post reconciliationem cum defunctis fuerit, ad Dominum vadit, ad requiem vadit, à populo Diabolis separabitur. Exhort. ad poenit.

shall

shall not be deprived of the kingdom of God, and shall be separated from the people of Satan. Wherein I note these things; 1. The abstinence of a sinner, and separation from the Church, in those words, *ligamento quo erat constrictus, & à corpore Christi separatus*, expressly mentioning the spiritual bond, and censure. 2. His admission to his penance, *nescit si possit ipsam penitentiam accipere*; for with *Ambrose penitentiam agere* points at internal contrition, & *penitentiam accipere* at the external Ministry, and declaration thereof by publick Penance. 3. This Discipline consisted in open confession of sin before God, his Priests, and people; the sinner desiring their prayers on his behalf, to which these words relate, *confiteri Deo, & sacerdoti peccata sua*, joyned with some passages in the former testimony. 4. His Reconciliation and absolution, whereby the censure is removed, the bond loosed, and the separated person again restored, in those words, & *solutus fuerit à ligamento & post reconciliationem, &c.* 5. His carriage after his reconciliation, viz. the fruits of repentance, a good life, which the Father thus describeth; *Tell us how to demean our selves after repentance*; I say unto you, abstaine from drunkenness, from concupiscence, from theft, from evil speaking, from immoderate laughter, from idle words, whereof account must be made; I mention these light faults, to say nothing of greater crimes. And thus much from Saint *Ambrose*.

St. *Augustine* mentioneth the injunction of this publick Confession for notorious offences, thus: *If the Penitents sin do not only redound to his own mischief, but also unto much scandal of others; and the Bishop shall think it expedient for the profit of the Church, let him not refuse to recognize his penance in the presence of many, yea of all the people; let him not resist, let him not by his shamefastness add swelling to his deadly and mortal wound: And the same*

*Quid est bene vivere post penitentiam doce nos: dico vobis abstinere ab ebriositate, à concupiscentia, à furto, à malo eloquio, ab immoderato visu, à verbo otioso unde reddidit homines sunt rationem in die iudicii. Ecce quam levia dixi, ut tacerem gravia & pestifera. Ambr. ib.*

*Si peccatum ejus non solum in gravi ejus malo, sed etiam in tanto scandalo est aliorum, atque hoc expedire utilitati ecclesie videtur Antistiti, in notitia multorum vel etiam totius plebis agere penitentiam non recusat, non resistat, non lethali & mortiferæ plage per pudorem addat tumorem. Aug. homil. 50. ult. tom. 10.*

Nam & ipsa penitentia, quando digna est causa secundum morem ecclesie ut agatur, plerumq; infirmitate non agitur, quia & pudor, & timor est displicendi, dum plus d'lectat hominum aestimatio, quàm iustitia qua quisque se humiliat peccando; unde non solum cum agitur Penitentia, sed ut agatur, Dei misericordia necessaria est. Aug. Enchirid. Qu. 81.

Ecclesiastical  
story.

Stant Rei, & velut in lamentationibus constituti, dum enim sacra Celebratio fuerit adimpleta, illi communionem non percipientes, cum gemitu, & lamentatione seipos in terram prosternunt, ad quos concurrens Episcopus, & ipse cum lacrimis, & gemitu spiritali prostermitur, & omnis Ecclesie plebs fleatibus mundatur: post hoc autem prior surgit Episcopus, & elevat jacentes à terra, tum competenti pro penitentibus facta oratione, dimittit omnes. At illi afflictionibus sponte vacantes, aut jejuniis, aut abstinentià lavacri, aut suspensione Ciborum, aut rebus aliis que jubentur, expectant Communionis tempus, quod decrevit Episcopus; constituto verò tempore, velut quoddam debitum, exolventes, afflictione peccatorum curati cum populo communionem participantur. Hist. Tripart. cap. 35.

estimation amongst men delighting more than justice, whereby a man humbleth himself in repenting; whence it is that the mercy of God is requisite, not onely for the undergoing of penance, but for the undertaking thereof also.

In the story of the Church the solemn practice hereof is thus recorded: The guilty persons stand as far off much lamenting their

Doctor in another place touching the usual impediments that cross this practice of piety, saith, when there is just cause for the undergoing of penance according to the custome of the Church, oftentimes the same is put off through Weakness; because the fear and shame therein are displeasing; credit and

offences, and while the sacred service of the Church is celebrating, they not communicating cast themselves upon the ground with groans, and mourning; to whom the Bishop approacheth and spreads himself upon the earth also with like lamentations, and the whole Church is overflown with tears: after some space the Bishop first riseth, and then raiseth them from the earth also then prayer and supplication being made on the penitents behalf, he sendeth them away. But they wholly and willingly give up themselves to affliction and fasting; abstaining from Baths and such meats, and all such things as are enjoyned them to forbear; ex-

pecting the day of restitution decreed by the Bishop: and, at the time appointed, having discharged (as it were) a certain debt, and being made sound from their sins, are restored to the communion of the people of God. Here we may perceive that after the Penitents had published themselves, and their sins in the face of the Church, they were not forthwith admitted to participate, but time of forbearance not onely from the sacred Communion



but from such meats, apparel, places of solace, and recreation (which otherwise might be moderately used,) was enjoined by the *Bishop*, who prescribed rules of fasting, affliction, and such like subduing of the flesh for a season: that such persons as had been more loose in their former conversation than others, should be restrained above others, according to the measure of their iniquities, that by the practice of such contrary virtues the contrary vices might be expelled; the ordering of which limitation, and the relaxation thereof, was wholly in the *Bishops* power, and discretion; who having heard the nature of their disease, prescribed such medicines as might best comply for the healing thereof. I dare not say the sins of those times were greater than ours, but I dare say the conscience they made of sin was greater, and appeal to impartial Readers, that if this discipline were on foot, and sinners could not come by reconciliation any other way, nor the holy Sacraments administered to any publick offenders without good proof, and demonstration of a solemn repentance: Let I say spiritual men judge, whether heinous offences would not be more rarely committed; if men would not stand more in awe, and sin not; if the keys of the Church would not be of more sovereign use, and remedy; if Repentance would not be more seriously performed, wounded Conscience better pacified, the Church less scandalized, the blessed Sacrament less profaned, God better pleased with us; and consequently the nerves of all religious devotion more entirely confirmed.

Come we now to examples of such Penitents as have submitted their necks to the yoke of this discipline, and have found much ease thereby. In old *Irenaeus* there is mention of certain women who being seduced and corrupted by *Mark* the heretick, upon their conversion did open penance, weeping and lamenting their former subversion, and some underwent not that penance as despairing of the mercy of God. And *Eusebius* relateth, that when *Philip* the Emperour, son to *Gordianus* (who enjoyed the Laurel, *An. Dom.* 246)

*In manifesto faciebant exomologesin, plangentes, & lamentantes corruptelam. Quod cum videret ad exomologesin illam non accederent, in silentio desperantes de vita dei.*  
*Iren. lib. 1. c. 9.*

being,

*Cum in die Pasche, i. e. in ipsis vigiliis interesse voluisset, & communicare Mysteriis, ab Episcopo loci non prius esse permissum, nisi confiteretur peccata sua, & inter penitentes staret; nec ullo modo copiam sibi Mysteriorum futuram, nisi prius per penitentiam culpas, quæ de eo ferebantur plurimæ, diluisset; ferunt igitur libenter eum, quod à sacerdote imperatum fuerat suscepisse, ævinum sibi inesse metum, & fidem Religionis plenissimam rebus atque operibus comprobando. Euseb. Eccl. hist. l. 6. c. 25. ex versione Ruffini, nam Græca non sunt admanum.*

*cing by his actions that the fear of God, and sound faith of Religion was within his breast. There are that doubt what religion this*

*Quidam Christianum fuisse, quidam cultum Christianum simulasse, alii matrem ejus ab origine audisse mysteria religionis nostræ tradunt. Aventin. hist. Bowr. l. 2. p. 177.*

*This is certain, that Lactantius and Ambrose affirm Constantine to be the first that planted the Cross of Christ upon the Imperial Crown: and Eusebius himself tells us that he came by the former story but by report onely. The same Author makes relation of one Natalis, who being seduced by certain Hereticks to be of their faction, to gain a Bishoprick, and an*

*Frequenter admonebatur in somniis à Domino. — ad ultimum à sanctis Angelis per totam noctem verberatus, & pænis gravibus excruciat, cilicio se induit, & cinere conspergit, ac multis lacrimis errorem suum dolens, ante pedes Zepherini Episcopi prostermit, & vestigiis omnium, non modo Clericorum, sed & Laicorum multa cum lamentatione provolutus, &c. Euseb. Eccl. hist. lib. 5. c. 28,*

*being a Christian resorted to the Church at Easter to communicate; he was not permitted by the Bishop of that place ἡ ἐξομολογῆσαι; unless he would confess his sins, and rank himself among the Penitents; nor could the Bishop be brought by any means to administer the Eucharist unto him, except he first washed away those many sins (whereof he was infamous) by Repentance: the report goeth, that he obeyed the Bishops injunction, evidencing by his actions that the fear of God, and sound faith of Religion was within his breast. There are that doubt what religion this Emperour was of, some affirming him to be a Christian, some again that he did dissemble that profession; others that his mother only was instructed in the mysteries of the Christian faith.*

*annual pension, was oftentimes admonished in his dreams, how Jesus Christ would not the destruction of him, that had made so many and so good confessions of him under the Cross; to which he (it seemeth) giving little credit, was not long asleeper for a whole night well scourged, and tortured by Angels; in the morning he gat up, put on sackcloth, and did ashes on his head, and*

*with many tears bewailed his apostasy; he prostrated himself at the feet of Zepherine the Bishop, and of all the Clergie, and Laity also, in so lamentable wise, as he moved the whole Church to tears,*

tears, and compassion, that by their prayers he might obtain from Christ forgiveness, shewing forth the scars and wounds he had endured for his name; and at length with much difficulty he was restored.

The next news to me occurring of the voice of this turtle, is the example of a Roman Dame *Fabiola*, drawn to the life by that excellent Artist Saint *Hierome*; her sin was (if I dare call it so) the repudiating of her former husband for adultery, and (he yet living) the marrying of another, which although *Hierome* stile the shadow of a miserable marriage, yet confessing the fault, he avoideth the same by a necessity of better to marry than to burn, and, *I will that younger widows marry, &c.* and prefers it before the credit of being the wife of one husband, and to play the Harlot; shewing that he disliked such marriages as unexpedient, not disapproving them as unlawful. He limns her penance with this pencil, *How she came forth wrapped in sackcloth to make publick confession of her error before the people of Rome; how a little before Easter she resorted to the Lateran Church, ranking her self among the Penitents; the Bishop, the Priests, and the whole assembly bemoaning with her; her hair diffused, or carelessly spread; her countenance wan and doleful; her sordid neck and hands besmeared with such tears as could wash away any sin, with such mourning as could fetch out any spots: and elsewhere; she laid open her offence to all, Rome beheld, and not with dry eyes, her disfigured and ill coloured wound; her coats rip'd and unsowed; her head naked, her face veiled; she entred not into the Church of God, but like *Miriam*, *Moses* sister, separated from the Camp: she abode without, that the Priest, who had cast her forth, might call her in. She came*

*Fabiola.*

*Umbra* quamdam miserabilis subire conjugii, quæ in sub gloria uirgine opera exercere meretricium.

*Saccum induere ut errorem publicè fateretur, & totâ urbe spectante Romanâ, ante diem Pasche in Basilica quondam Lateranæ staret in ordine penitentium; Episcopo, Presbyteris, & omni populo collacrimantibus, spurcum crinem, ora lurida, & squalidas manus, sordida colla submitteret. Quæ peccata fletus iste non purget? quas inveteritas maculas hæc lamenta non abluant? — Aperuit cunctis vulnus suum, & decorem in corpore cicatricem fletus Romæ conspexit; diffusa habuit latera, nudum caput, clausum os; non est ingressa Ecclesiam Domini, sed extra castra cum *Miriam* sorore *Mosè* separata, consedit, ut quem sacerdos eiecerat ipse revocaret, descendit de solio deliciarum suarum; accepit molam, fecit farinam, & discalceatis pedibus transiit fluenta lacrimarum, sedit super carbones ignis, hi fuere in adiutorium: Faciem per quam secundo viro placuerat verberabat, oderat gemmas, linteamina videre non poterat, ornamenta fugiebat, sic dolebat quasi adulterium commisisset, & multis impendii medicaminum unum vulnus sanare cupiebat. — Recep. à sub oculis omnis Ecclesiæ communione. Hierom. ad Ocean. Epitaph. Fab.*

down

down from her castle of pleasure, she took the mill-stones, and ground the male, and making bare the leg passed through the river of tears, sate upon the coles of fire, which were a help unto her; buffeting that face which was her second husbands felicity: She hated jewels, no linen napry within her eyes; she eschewed all ornaments, and so took on as if guilty of adultery; applying divers plasters for the curation of one wound; and so in the view of the whole Church was received to the Communion. Where to say nothing of this Matrons sin, in her penance we may take notice of these steps; 1. Of the exclusion, and barring of hay-nous offenders from the assembly of Christians, in that she was shut out from the Church, as *Miriam* from the tent. 2. That there was a set place, and time, where the penitents stood, and when they performed their penance, in that she set her self amongst them, and resorted to the Church a little before Easter. 3. The manner thereof; her habit mournful, her hair loose, her eyes full of tears, her countenance cast down, and all things about her instruments and tokens of sorrow. 4. The Confession of her sin was publick before the *Bishop*, his Clergy, and his people, (for private confession, if you beleeve *Erasmus*, was not yet set up.) 5. The Clergy, and People were all of them indulgent in compassionating the state of such Christian abjects. 6. And lastly, the censure was taken away, and the penitent reconciled.

The succeeding times were not so pregnant in examples of this kind, by reason that this discipline was for a while discontinued, but set on foot again by the power of *Charles* the great, and the *Fathers* assembled in the fourth Council at *Arles*, according to the direction of the ancient *Canons*; and not long after chanced that remarkable Penance of *Fulco Nerra* Earl of *Anjou*, for murdering of his Nephew and Pupill the young Count de *Nantes*, so rack'd and tortured in his conscience, which to appease he went on pilgrimage to the S. Sepulchre at *Jerusalem*, attended with six servants whom he obliged by oath to execute

Aparet tempore Hieronymi clanculariam confessionem institutam non fuisse. *Erasmi*. Schol. in Epitaph. *Fabiolæ*.

Conc. l. *Arles*. l. 4. c. 26. an. 800.

Accompagné seulement de six valets, auxquelles il fit jurer de faire ce qu'il leur

commanderoit, commanda à l'un de eux de lui mettre la corde à Col, & le tirer par icelle à S. Sepulchre, & à deux autres de prendre des verges, & de le fouetter bien rudement, encores qu'il eut les espauls de schiqueteés de coups de verges, il print la poigne de l'un de eux, & redouta bien plus rudement, que n'avoient ses serviteurs.

What

whatsoever he should command; entred into the Sepulchre, forthwith he strips himself into his skin, and commandeth one of his servants to fasten a rope to his neck, and bind him therewith, and two others to whip him soundly with cords; exposing himself to the sight & derision of the Infidels, and purchasing of them free access to the Sepulchre with great sums of money; after the inflicting of many stripes, his servants pitying the furrows, & wounds upon his body, and refusing to scourge him any more, he compassed one of their scourges, and redoubled the blows upon himself in far greater measure than they had done, crying out, Lord receive to grace, and pardon the miserable perjur'd fugitive *Fulk*: after he had performed this solemn penance, he returned to his Countrey to esteemed and honoured, his sanctity purchasing unto him such renown, as he seemed to have received a Crown at *Jerusalem* of inestimable value.

Seigneur recoy  
à pardon le mis-  
erable parjure,  
& fugitif  
Foulques. A.  
Thener vies des  
hommes illu-  
stres Livre 4.  
c. 2.

So went the world in those dayes, and such conscience was made of sin and sorrow; after that came in the *Canonists* and *School-men*, the two supporters of the *Roman chair*, and this discipline escaped not their hands without some violence and wresting, to serve their own inventions; for whereas in the Primitive times it was prescribed as a sign and expression of inward sorrow, and used as a remedy against sin, and a medicine for sin; they make it a satisfaction in the scale of justice for public sin, and in that sense, as they do their private satisfactions enjoined upon secret confession, and close audience, as expiatory, both for the appeasing of Gods anger, and remitting of the offence; an office peculiar to our *Saviour*. What these men have made of penance you shall hear, which the *Canonists* say they have from the Council of *Agatho*; I will not defraud my Reader thereof, and for his plenary knowledg herein, will compare the narration of a *School-man* and a *Canonist*, that is *Gabriel Biel*, and *Raymundus*, and thus it goes.

About the beginning of *Lent*, that is upon *Ash-wednesday*, such sinners that are designed to undergo this solemn penance, must present themselves at the Church door before the Bishop

*Penitentia hic non accipitur pro virtute, quia ista est in sola voluntate, nec pro Sacramento, quia & huius foris secretissimus est, sed pro satisfactione publica pro publicis peccatis imposita. Biel. l. 4. dist. 14. Q. 3. dub. 6.*

Gabr. ubi supra. Raymund. tr. 4.

Penitens in die cinerum debet se representare ante fores Ecclesie in tristis habitu, nudis pedibus, &c.

of the place, and his Clergie, in sackcloth, naked on the head and feet, their countenance dejected, and cast down to the earth, professing by their very habit and look their guilt. The

*Episcopus se prosternens in terram, dicat cum Clericis, 7. penitenciales Psalmos, cum lacrimis, pro eorum absolutione, — tunc manus imponat, aquam benedictam super eos spargat, cinerem post mittat:*

*The Bishop then attending with his Clergie, brings them into the Church, and all prostrated on the ground; he reciteth over them with tears the seven penitential Psalmes for their absolution; after he hath prayed, standing up he laieth his hands upon them, and sprinkleth them with holy water, and putteth ashes upon their heads, and covereth them with*

*Sicut Adam fuit de paradiso ejectionis, ita isti pro peccatis suis ab Ecclesia abiciuntur; postea iubet (Episcopus) Ministros, ut eos extra januas Ecclesie expellant, Clerus vero prosequatur eos cum responso, In sudore vultus tui visceris pane tuo.*

*sackcloth, and denounceth unto them, that look how Adam was cast forth of Paradise, so are they for their sins expelled from the Church; which sentence is no sooner given, than some of his Ministers are commanded by him to drive them out, the Clergie professing, either singing, or saying the Respond, In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread; that beholding the Church so troubled for their sins, they may not slight their penance. Upon Munday Thursday they return again, and are brought in by the Deane, or some Priest of good respect, where they neither communicate in the Eucharist, nor in the Pax, and so they continue till the Vtas of Easter, and then they depart away from the Church, and are not admitted till the Ash-wednesday following; and this course to hold every year, till*

*In cena Domini à Decano rursus Ecclesie presentantur, & licet stent in Ecclesia, non tamen communicant cum aliis in Eucharistia, vel osculo, & sic erunt usque ad octavam Pasche, & tunc iterum exibunt de Ecclesia, & erunt extra Ecclesiam usque ad talem diem sequentis anni; & sic fiet annuatim, usque ad finem Penitentiae. Ex Gabr. & Raymundo.*

*the date of their penance be expired, and they perfectly restored.*

*Ritus ista hodie in nullis (so I read for non-nullis in the copy. I use) vel paucissimis Ecclesiis observatur.*

This Rite Gabriel confesseth in his dayes seldome to be practised in any Church, and we see how in tract of time it had gathered some rust and dross of superstition, very incident to exercises of this kind. A Penance (they say) not to be inflicted on all sorts of people, as the Clergy are exempted for the honour of their order, and young men for the solemnity of the discipline, and that, but once upon any. Indeed Saint Ambrose



*brose* inclines to this opinion, who reprehending the inordinate use of such persons as frequent such heynous offences, for which publick penance is injoyned, affirmeth that if such sinners had sincerely repented, and in their hearts detested sin so much as they made shew to do, this Physick once taken would have wrought so perfect a cure upon them, as there could be no fear of relapse, nor further use of any Medicine of that nature; and the same *Father* seems also to have no good liking of that disease, or Patient, where this Physick will not work: and in those severe times lapsed sinners already disciplined, were neither restored to publick penance, nor to the publick Communion; after which publick penance (saith Petavius) if again they intangle themselves with the same sins, they altogether shut out from the Church and participation of the mysteries, could never after be reconciled; for to Christians there belongeth one Baptisme where-

by they are bound unto the Church, so one penance publicly to be performed. Surely in Christian policy there are great reasons why this Penance should not be reiterated; for the Christian Church may well grow jealous of that party as defective in the inward compunction of the heart, that his affections were not fully taken off from sin, and that he had no perfect hatred thereof, (and by consequent not disposed to this discipline, where the sign and thing signified, namely internal and external sorrow are both required) that shall make no bones of falling into the same, or like grievous offences, for which he underwent so great a shame, and made so solemn a detestation thereof; the Ancients therefore suspend their judgments in that sinners case. God, saith Epiphanius, accepteth the penance of a sinner that falleth after Baptisme, but what shall become of him if

*Merito reprehenduntur qui sæpius agendam penitentiam putant, qui luxuriantur in Christo; nam si verè agerent penitentiam, iterandum postea non putarent, quia sicut unum baptismum, ita una penitentia; quæ tamen publicè agitur, nam quotidiani nos debet panitere peccati; sed hæc delictorum leviorum, illa graviorum.* Ambr. l. 2. de Pæn. c. 10.

Post illam penitentiam, si iisdem se criminibus obstrinxissent, ab Ecclesiæ aditu & à mysteriorum communione penitus exclusi, reconciliari amplius non poterant. D. Petav. animadvers. in Epiphani. hæc. 59. p. 239.

Δόκησις τοῖς  
νυν μέλανοι-  
ας, ἡ μέλα-  
νοια, τὸ πολ-  
λάκις ἀλῆσθαι  
συγνώμην,  
ἐφ' οἷς πλημ-  
μελῶμεν πολ-  
λάκις. Clem.  
Alex. Strom.  
2. pag. 282.

δέχεται ὁ  
Θεὸς τὴν με-  
τάνοιαν, καὶ

καὶ τὸ βάπτισμα ἑάν τις παρῇ, πῶς ὃ καὶ τὸτο ποιεῖ, αὐτὸ καὶ μὴ γινώσκει  
ἀνεξέλεντα γὰρ τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ. Epiphani. lib. 2. hæres. 59. tom. 1. p. 498.

be sin after penance, he onely knoweth whose judgments are past finding out. And because the wayes of Gods mercy are past finding out, such a lapsed sinner may not be incapable of pardon, although of penance, and may find reconciliation at Gods hands, although his servants are fearful to intermeddle therein, not as envying Gods mercy, like *Jonas* to *Nineveh*, or denying lapsed sinners to be capable thereof, as *Novatian*, but careful onely not to exceed their Lords instructions, and

*Quamvis eis in Ecclesia locus humillime penitentiae non concedatur, Deus tamen super eos suae penitentiae non obliviscitur.*

commission: although (saith *Austin*) a place for humble penance be denied in the Church, God will not be unmindful of his patience towards them;

where the Father relating the works of piety, and labour of contrition performed by such relapsed sinners, demandeth,

*Nihil ista proderunt in posterum? avertat Deus tam immanem sacrilegamque dementia.*  
Aug. Epist. 54.

shall they avail them nothing afterwards? God defend us from so savage and sacrilegious madness; for God in whose hands are all mens

Psal. 51.

2 Tim. 2. 25.

hearts, can soften and harden, and make them malleable, which no man can do; he can create a new heart, and renew a right spirit; a piece of work which none but he can do; It is he that gives repentance, and he can best discern of the effect and operation, that grants the influence. This being certain, where true contrition is, there is remission of sin, and where Repentance is Gods own work, the Contrition is unfeigned, and the pardon sealed; insomuch that two passages in the sixth and tenth Chapters to the *Hebrews*, that seem less favourable and equal to lapsed sinners, the one taking away Repentance, and the other the Sacrifice for pardon, (which drew many into a hard conceit of the *Author*, and Epistle it self, although the error lay onely in the misapprehension) have been often urged by the old *Precisians*, and as often vindicated by the old *Fathers*: whereof I will give my Reader a taste, before I come clean off from this subject.

Heb. 6. 4. 5. 6.

In the Epistle thus, *It is impossible that those who were once enlightened, &c. If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves afresh the Son of God, and put him to open shame; where to such persons initiated*

in the holy mysteries of Christianity, and fallen away, all possibility of renewing by repentance is taken away, as guilty of another crucifying of Christ, and opprobry towards him. A repentance is there denied, it cannot be denied, and denied to them that were formerly baptized into the Christian faith is apparent also. Such then *cannot be renewed*, that is, in such a manner as at their first admission into Christianity, which was by Baptisme, and imposition of hands; it comes home then as if the Apostle had said, such as were at the first received into Baptisme, and thereby obtained the remission of sins, if such fall, they are not so to be renewed, that is by a *second Baptisme of Repentance*, the solemnization whereof is but once to one party; so lapsed sinners may be renewed, but not after that way. As virginity once lost cannot corporally be restored, yet the lost credit may be repaired by a chaste conversation afterwards; so the lapsed sinner after Baptisme *ἔχει δευτέραν ἱεσιν*, saith Epiphanius, hath another *salve* though not another *bath*. And this to be the Apostles meaning Saint Chrysostome makes good by a twofold reason; First, because mention is made of a fresh crucifying of the Son of God;

for after he had said, it is impossible to be renewed to repentance, he keeps not there silence, but addeth crucifying afresh, &c. now Baptisme is a figure of the Cross of Christ; and as it was not for Christ to be crucified again, no more is it for a Christian to be again

baptized; and as he died but once, so are we but once baptized. Secondly, the word *ἀνακαινίζωναι*, to be renewed, proveth Baptisme to be meant, for that's the Sacrament of Renovation, *τὸ λέγειν μὲν* whereby we put on the new man Christ Jesus; with whom agreeth Ambrose: The words themselves shew Baptisme to be meant, wherein is expressed that it is impossible the lapsed to be renewed by repentance; for by that Laver we are renewed, by which we were born again:

Οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν ἀδύνατον ἀνακαινίζωναι εἰς μετέωρον, καὶ εἰσέκησεν, ἀλλ' εἶπὼν ἀδύνατον, ἐπὶ γὰρ γεν ἀνακαινίζωναι, ὅτε τίς, τὸ βάπτισμα σωτὴρ ἐστὶ— ὥστε ἔν ἐκ ἑδαι ἐν δευτέρῳ σωθῆναι καὶ χεῖρον, ἕως ἄδὲ βαπτισθῆναι.

Epiphanius lib.  
2. contr. hæres.  
tom. 1. p. 494.

De baptismo autem dictum verba ipsa declarant, quibus significavit, impossibile esse lapsos renovari per penitentiam; per lavacrum enim renovamur, per quod renascimur.  
Ambr. lib. 1. de Pœnit. cap. 2.

the flower of Greece therefore concludeth, what then? is there no more repentance? there is repentance, but there is not a second

Τὶ ἐν ἐκ ἑστὶ μελάνοια; ἢ ἐστὶ μελάνοια, ἀλλὰ βάπτισμα ἐκ ἑστὶ δούλερον. Chrys. λογ. θ. ad Hebr. tom. 4. p. 482.

Τὶ ἐν ἐκβέλῃαι ἡ μελάνοια; μὴ γένοιτο, ἀλλ' ὁ διὰ τῆ δουλῆς λείπει ἀνακαίνισμός— ἐκ ἑστὶ δούλερον βάπτισμα, ὅτι μὴδὲ δούλερον σωρὸς. Theoph. in Heb. 6. 5.

same Question and Answer is in *Occumenius*, who backeth this interpretation by the authority of *Cyril*, and by the former reasons used by *Saint Chrysostome*:

Ὅθεν γὰρ ἔπεν ἀνακαίνισεν, ὅπερ ἰδίον βαπτισμαῖο καὶ ἀνακαίνισμας ὅπερ καὶ τὸ το βαπτισμαῖο ἰδίον· ὁ ἐν πάλιν διὰ βαπτισμαῖο δούλερον μετανοεῖν θέλων, ἀνακαίνισσιν τὸν Χριστὸν πάλιν σφραγίσας αὐτόν. *Occumen.*

Renovatio per  
sacri baptismatis  
lacrarium  
secundā vice  
fieri non potest.  
Ambr. in Heb.  
cap. 6.  
Heb. 10. 26.

Si ulterius peccaverimus. Beza.

Hosiam iis re-  
siduum esse ne-  
gat, qui à Chri-  
sti nomine dis-  
cedunt. Calvin.  
in loc.

1. Because there is mention of renovation, which properly belongeth unto Baptisme, and of a second crucifying of Christ, & of that properly Baptisme is a type; the man therefore that is once baptized to repentance, and would repent by being again baptized, crucifieth Christ afresh, who in the second Baptisme suffereth the second

time; and to the same purpose is the exposition under the name of *Ambrose*, or rather the translation of *Saint Chrysostome* (as indeed it is) not denying a second repentance, but a second Baptisme to repentance.

But the words that pinch more than the former are, *If we sin willingly after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins*; wherein the benefit denied is the sacrifice for sin, and the parties excepted against, some kind of sinners: 1. That sin against their conscience after the receiving of the knowledge of the truth. 2. That sin wilfully, so that sins of ignorance and infirmity exclude not, but onely wilful apostasie, for how can Christ be a sacrifice for such as disclaim him? his sacrifice then remains not for them, because they

they remain not *his*, cutting off themselves from the fruit thereof by a voluntary defection. Saint Chrysostome expoundeth that *Sacrifice* as formerly, of a *second baptisme*: *He is not* (saith he) *such an enemy to our salvation as to take away repentance, or the propitiation for sin, or to reject him that hath fallen after illumination; What is it then? he taketh away second baptisme, for he saith not, there remaineth no more repentance; or no more forgiveness, but no more a sacrifice, no more a second Cross, for that he calleth a sacrifice. (a) By one sacrifice once upon the cross, &c.* meaning by that sacrifice Christs death upon the cross, or rather Baptisme, a representative type thereof. The Greek Scholia fasten upon the parties, and bid us consider, *that it is not said, if we have, but if we do sin voluntarily, thereby signifying that to such impenitent sinners as persevere in their wickedness till death, there is no sacrifice; Whereby repentance is not excluded, but required rather as a necessary antecedent; q.d. there remaineth a sacrifice for penitent sinners, but none for the impenitent; and* Theophylact to the same tune also, *If we sin voluntarily, that is remain in our sins without Repentance. To the same purpose Hugo Cardinalis writeth thus, voluntary sin is not signified so much, as the custome of sinning, and final impenitency, for he saith not *ekose* that sin willingly, but wilfully; for he is said to be wilful in any matter, that is buse and earnest therein, and willing, that is but for a season. Now where repentance is not, the sacrifice of Christs death is not applicable, and where there is no ceasing*

from :

οὐδὲ τὴν μελάνοιαν ἀναρῆναι ἢ διὰ τῆς μελάνοιαις ἐξίλασμον, ἔδὲ ὡς ἡ καταβάνη διὰ τῆς ἀπογνώσεως ἢ ἐπτακότα, ἀλλὰ τί; τὸ δεύτερον ἀναρῆναι λέγον, ἢ γὰρ εἶπεν ἔχει ἐστὶ μελάνοια, ἀλλὰ οὐσία ἔχει ἐστὶ, [ἔδὲ ἔχει ἐστὶν ἀφεσις] σωρὸς δεύτερ' ἢ ἔχει ἐστὶ, θυσιαν γὰρ τὸ καλῶς, μία οὐσία, &c. Chrys. ad Hebr. λόγ. κ. p. 533. (a) Hebr. 10. 14.

Σημειῶσαι ὅτι ἐκ εἰπεν ἀμαρτανάντων, δέξαι δέλαν τὸ ἄχει τελευτῆς ἐπιμένειν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ, ἔνθεν γὰρ μάλιστ' αἰῶνον ὅτι ἐκ ἀναρῆναι ἢ μελάνοιαν ὀφείμην.

Ἐκαστὸς ἀμαρτανάνων] τῆς ἐν ἐπιμένοντων τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ἀμετανοήτως. Theophyl.

Significatur non solum peccatum quod voluntarie fit, sed consuetudo ipsius peccati, & finalis impenitentia; non enim ut volentibus peccare, sed voluntariè peccantibus; voluntarius enim est qui in aliquo assiduus est, volens qui ad tempus. Hugo Card. ad Hebr. 10.

from sin, there is no true Repentance. Thus we see the fountain is clear, however false glosses may molest and trouble the stream, for a time, at length it will settle and return to its native clarity; and thus much by occasion of solemn Penance once imposed, and if it savour of a digression, let us return where we left, and perfect the small remainder to be now said of publick Penance.

- Late Authors have observed four several degrees which the penitents took in those austere dayes; *fletus, auditio, substratio, & consentia*: 1. Weeping before the porch, 2. hearing in the porch, 3. lying all along on the Church pavement in expectation of the Bishops prayer and blessing; so called (as wicnesleth a great Antiquary *à procidendo*, because the penitent

ὑπόπλωσις est dicta quod ὑπέπλεν,  
h.e. coram Episcopo procidit bat penitens ἐν τῷ  
πύλῳ; ὅτε γὰρ πύλῳς, intra Templi portam admis-  
sus, cum Catechumenis facessere iubeatur, ac  
certis diebus coram Episcopo procidens, imposi-  
tione manuum, ac solemnī precatione impetri-  
tus, dimitti solebat. D. Petavius animad-  
vert. in Epiph. hæc. 59.

Ἡ σὺςσις ἵνα συνίσταται τοῖς πιστοῖς,  
καὶ μὴ ἐξέρχεται μὴ δὲ κατηνυμένῳν.  
*Thaumaturgus.*

admitted within the porch of the Temple, fell down before the Bishop, and was commanded to depart thence with the Catechumeni, and so prostrating himself before the Bishop at certain times, was dismissed with imposition of hands, and solemn prayer: the fourth approach was standing with the assembly within the Church; where they communicated with the faithful in the station and consistency, but not in the Communion, and were not put forth like profane Merchandizers, partaking of the Orizons of the Church, but not of the Sacrament. Thus they made their approaches to the Lords Table by degrees; and not like the Gallants of our times that are no sooner up from the Table of Devils, charged with gluttony and surfeiting, but without any let or check of conscience become very confident guests at that Spiritual Banquet; yea, scarce cold from their sin, and their evening surfeit undigested, but they present themselves at the Lords Board. Good God! what terror must needs possess such profane breasts, when the Master of that feast shall shake them by the sleeve, with a Friend how camest thou hither not having on thy wedding garment?



As the degrees which they observed, so the places where the penitents stood were designed also; Bellarmine hath set them down out of Pacianus thus: *The Penitents in habit doleful, and to behold lamentable, stood first at the Church door, howling at the gates, and craving the prayers of the faithful within; this was πεύλασις: next they came within the porch, where they might hear the word preached with the Catechumens, and this was ἀνέλασις; and they audientes, auditors only.* 3. In process of time they entred into the Oratory, and abode with the Competentes, praying and contemplating the Sacrament, but not admitted at the celebration; this was called ὑπόπλωσις from beholding, (wherein the Cardinal not punctually following his guide, is out both in the derivation and application:) After that they were admitted amongst the fideles at the celebration of the Sacrament, but were not yet come so far as to partake thereof; and this was οὐσαςίς, their station. 5. Their penance fully accomplished and ended, they were reconciled and received the sacred Eucharist, and this was μίσωσις, the complement. Thus far the Cardinal, (though not so faithfully as he ought) hath related from Pacianus, Greg. Neocesar, and Photius, men well acquainted with these rites. Thou seest (Christian Reader) at what a distance sinners were held in the days of old, and not fully restored, till time and grief had worn out their sin, the scandal satisfied, and their hearts seasoned with devotion. I will wind up this discourse with Cassander. In the Primitive Church that sluggish professors might become more zealous, certain times and offices were appointed unto Penitents guilty of fouler crimes, wherein they might not only stir up, and exercise the inward repentance of the minde before God, but declare unto the Church their sincere and unfeigned sorrow, and so be reconciled by imposition of hands from the Bishop, and the Clergie, and restored to the Communion; the which prescribed duties were called canonical satisfactions

G

Lib. i. de. Pœnit. cap. 22.

In veteri Ecclesia, ut sepius excitarentur, penitentibus ob graviora scelera, certa tempora & officia definita fuerunt, quibus non solum coram Deo interiore animi penitentiam excitarent, & exerceant, sed etiam Ecclesie verè se atque ex animo penitere declararent, atque ita minus impositione Episcopi, & Cleri, reconciliarentur, & ius Communicationis acciperent: atque hæc prescripta officia canonica satisfactiones, seu pœne vocarentur, quæ jam imperitiâ Episcoporum & Pastorum in abusum, & negligentiam, & sequitè tantum pastorum, quàm Populi in desertum venerant, nisi quod in privatis confessionibus aliqua eius rei vestigia remanserint. Cassand. Confessio.

or

or punishments, which now adays by the unskilfulness of Bishops and Pastors have grown to be abused, and through the negligence, and lukewarmness both of Pastors and people wholly laid aside, save that some footsteps thereof have remained in private Confessions. This modern and moderate Divine hath laid down the use and scope of this discipline, to rouse us up for religious duties, and to set forth before the Church our sincere repentance, and to be reconciled by Gods Ministers; the decay whereof he ascribeth to the supine negligence of the later Prelates, and that a shadow thereof remaineth to this day in private confession; the restitution whereof he much sighed after, as appeareth

*Quem publicæ satisfactionis priscum & Apostolicum morem ob publicæ & graviora peccata restitui, utile ac propemodum necessarium est, in quo potestis Ecclesiastica clavium in ligando & solendo, i. e. penitentiam indicendo, à Communionem separando, & rursus inducendo, absolvendo seu reconciliando, manifestissime cernitur. Cassand. ib.*

(a) Communion-Book at the Communion.

in these his words: *Which ancient and Apostolick custome of publick satisfaction for publick and grievous offences were very profitable, yea very necessary to be restored; wherein the Ecclesiastical power of the keyes in binding and loosing, that is, in imposing of penance, in separating from the communion, and again in releasing, absolving and reconciling, is manifestly discerned.* And thus have I prosecuted this discipline *ἡ πόλις*, as accurately as I could, that the same being known, (a) the vote of our Church for the restitution thereof may be the better perceived; which thing were much to be wished, and to which all that love the Lord *Jesus* must needs say, *Amin.*

## CHAP. IV.

## The Contents.

*Confession of sin addressed unto God chiefly, and to man also with considerable relations, grounded upon the law of nature; with God himself a necessary antecedent to pardon. Adam and Cain interrogated to extract Confession. Sundry Precedents of Penitents recourſing to God in Confession. There is ſhame in confeſſing to God, as well as unto man. Penitential Pfalmes compoſed by David for memorials, and helps to Confession. The Rabbins doctrine of Confession of ſin before God, practiſed in the time of the Goſpel, preached and urged by the Ancient Fathers, and ſo far by Chryſoſtome, as a tribute due to God onely, for which the Pontificians are jealous of him. Confession before God is not destructive of Confession before man in a qualified ſenſe, though preferred before it, and eſpecially called for by the old Doctors, although that be of ſingular uſe alſo.*

**H**itherto of Repentance both external and internal, the inward ſorrow and the outward demeanour thereof; and that ſolemn performance was not onely a vocal, and publick confeſſion of the guilt, but a real expreſſion; that as Saint Hierome ſaid of John the Baptiſt his food of *Locuſts*, and his garment of *Camels hair*, and the place of his abode the *deſart*, how they expreſſy ſet forth what he preached, the doctrine of Repentance: we are now to arreſt our ſelves upon that branch and part thereof which conſiſted in the verbal opening and declaration of ſin, which is a recognition of a ſinners unworthineſs, opened by himſelf in orall confeſſion to the principal party *wronged*, and ſometimes to ſuch

*Omnia penitentie preparata. Hieron. Math. 3.*

persons also, that by reason of their office, place, or respect, may be a mean to procure forgiveness, and reconciliation. Now by sin God is ever principally, and very often onely grieved, and sometimes Man also: In the first case to God onely and properly belongs confession, as He who is chiefly, and onely offended; in the second this Confession must be made to God, and the *Man* also that is wronged by us, to whom satisfaction for the trespasss also belongeth, and the end brotherly Reconciliation: The *Dean* of *Lovaine* hath taken notice of all,

*Est Confessio quæ fit Deo soli, & quæ homini, atque hæc rursus varia, 1. Quedam fit homini quem læsumus, pro obtinenda reconciliatione cum ipso, & remissione offensæ in illum; alia fit homini de peccatis in alium admissis, pro consilio aut reconciliatione habenda; sunt hæc confessiones juris naturæ, saltim reformatione per gratiam. Ruard. Tapper. art. 5. pag. 73.*

thus; There is a Confession which is made unto God alone, and another unto man, and this again is divers, 1. either unto the man whom we have hurt, for the obtaining of reconciliation with him, and forgiveness of the wrong from him; or Which is made unto a man of such sins as are done against any other, to ask counsel upon the matter of Reconciliation;

and all these confessions are of the law of nature, at the least as it is refined by grace. So Confession is made unto God, and in some cases to man also; furthermore the fact is acknowledged unto man in many points wherein he is not the Party offended, but considered as a mean and instrument to further, and obtain a reconciliation unto him who is justly displeased. And as by the light of nature we advise how to compass the favour of a great Personage justly forfeited, by making use of such persons that by reason of their place, alliance, or virtues claim a special interest in his affections; so is it with the sinner and God. It cannot be denied, but our *Mediator*, and *Intercessor*, and *Advocate* is *Christ Jesus the Lord*, and whatsoever *Others* do or prevail with God, it is for his sake: He is the *Corner-stone* reconciling the building, and upon him is built every Intercession from, or for any person besides. Yet other Intercessors there are; *Moses* stood in the gap, made an atonement for the people, and God was deprecated and reconciled. There are some persons that by their office and place as stewards in the Lords house, may give audience to sin, to

*Minister Penitentia duplex,  
1. cui confessio fit ex officio,  
ut Sacerdos:*

*2. alius qui audiendo confessionem vicem*

*supplere potest Sacerdotis in necessitate, ut est Laicus. Compend. Theol. verit. lib. 6. cap. 27.*

whom

whom is committed the Ministry of Reconciliation; and some by their virtues highly favoured by God, though not amongst his Priests, and they may take Confessions as *faithful Brethren*, and both of these by their prayers may induce God to mercy. My discourse must pass along, and in the way call in upon them all, but must begin with God the principal Party wronged, and the Principal object of Penitential Confession.

That Confession of sin ought to be made unto God as a condition requisite for the pardon thereof, and that it is no mean inducement to incline him to mercy, is an undoubted verity *ἀναγνῶσκος*, without Controversie embraced by all that make profession of Christianity; the foundation thereof is deeply laid in the law of nature it self, as a practical truth flowing from the *Principles* and conclusions thereof; and hence it came to pass, that God exacted it from their hands that had no other light than the guide of nature. Now Natural laws are the rules and decrees of reason, and as reason is the common guide to all men, so the dictates and statutes thereof bind all that are capable of that guidance: But this is a granted Maxime, *that every guilty person ought to be judged; and this like unto it, that none may be a judge in his own cause; and then this, That no offender can be judged without some accusation; to which add this, none can accuse of secret sins but the delinquent himself; the stone then first moved in this penitential judicature is the Confession of the party, upon which are grounded the indictment, and judgement.* And saith another Schoolman, *The law of nature is for a man to repent of the evil he hath done, so far forth as to grieve he hath done it, and that he seek all means to remedy his grief, and that he also utter some signes of sorrow.* Thou wilt say this reason concludeth for secret sins, which come to light no way but by Confession; but publick sins are to be confessed to God also.

Besides,

*Confessio que fit mente Deo est de jure naturali. Anton. part. 3. tit. 14. c. 9. sect. 2.*

*Deus in lege nature non solum exigit confessionem peccati. Bellar. l. 3. de Penit. c. 3.*

*Ratio legis est anima legis.*

*Hec est nota conclusio, quod quilibet Reus debet judicari; & ista, quod nullus debet esse iudex in propria causa, ergo Reus debet judicari per alium; sed non potest iudicari per alium nisi accusetur illi alii, nec potest accusari nisi a scipso, si peccatum suum sit occultum; ergo debet seipsum accusare alii a quo inducetur. Scotus. l. 4. d. Qu. 1. sect. 1. in ista Quaestione.*

*De jure naturali est quod aliquis poeniteat de malis que fecit, quantum ad hoc quod dolent se fecisse, & doloris rem dea querat per aliquem modum; & quod etiam aliqui signa doloris ostendant, ut Nonivite. Aquin. part. 3. quest. 84. art. 7.*

Besides, secret sins are to him *who seeth in darkness* no secret at all, and need not that *mean* for discovery, for wherein our Consciences do accuse us, *God is greater than our consciences*, that is, a more strict observer. To strengthen then this reason, I thus assume, The end of *penitential confession* is the judgment of *absolution*, not of *condemnation*, to free, not to punish for sin; and an absolution not to quit from sin, for God in justice cannot pronounce us just (for that were to call darkness light) but such an absolution as dischargeth us from the guilt, and obligation unto punishment, and so God in justice may, and in mercy doth justifie us (and this is to separate betwixt the light and the darkness.) Now remission of sin ever suppoeth sin, and the absolution from sin, the detection of sin, for sin maketh *man to be miserable*, and the Confession thereof *God to be merciful*. God requireth then no detection of sin in the judgment of *condemnation*, which is the punishment of sin, and wherein he proceedeth according to his own wisdom, but in that of *absolution*, which consisteth in the forgiveness of sin, the confession thereof in the party peccant hath ever been deemed requisite by way of pacification. Infomuch that

*Iusti pro omni statu post lapsum, qui habuerunt fidem de Deo, quod erat Rector universi iustus, postquam peccaverunt contra legem Dei, confitebantur Deo peccata sua, petentes ab eo remissionem; scientes cum sine tali remissione tanquam iustum iudicem vindicaturum de illo peccato.* SCOTUS, ib.

*all men whatsoever (saith Scotus) that have believed God to be the just Judge of all the world, and have acknowledged the law of his providence, seen in the government of the universe; upon every breach thereof have applied themselves to this supreme Governour, to appease him with humble acknow-*

*ledgment of the offence, and to deprecate his anger.* It was but early dayes in the world when God called upon *Adam*, where art thou? which was a summons to a reckoning, that as he had sinned, so he should take notice thereof, and prevent and pacifie his wrath by confession; it was an entrance into a Parley, or a preface and introduction (as the Rabbins say) into a further conference, thereby to expostulate with him about his offence, and to extract from him an ingenuous acknowledgment thereof.

Entrée de propos.  
gall.

פתח  
הדברים

ut ulterius cum eo loquendi &

amplius cum eo expostulandi occasionem hinc captaret, item ut ab eo confessionem peccati extorqueret. Rab. Sel.

And



And a Father of the Christian faith conceits no less; When God said to Adam, where art thou?

our first Parents then guilty persons were inquired after, to wash out that sin by confessing, which they had committed by transgressing. The like interrogatory was made to Cain, where

is thy Brother Abel? but his impudence was to out-face the murder, and plead not guilty, till God convicted him: The sin smothered brake forth into a greater flame, the sore skinned over with a deniall fettered; He that said at first, *nulla est iniquitas*, there is no iniquity in my hands, and refused to unlade his soul by confession, sinks under the burden, and cries out, *major est iniquitas*, my sin is greater than I am able to bear. Saint Chrysostome collecteth no less. Gods mercy appeared in the Question, Where is thy

Brother? to give him the hint and opportunity to bethink himself, that by confession of the fault, the guilt might be washed away; for this was Gods wont even from the beginning, to exalt from us a Confession of our sins, that upon the same he might shew mercy. He concludes, It is good to confess the fact, to disclose the wound to the Physician, and to receive medicines from him.

Gods people in process of time, (his good pleasure being known how propense he is to give a sinner audience) have not failed in this point to confess, nor he them to pardon; and because Confession of sin from the delinquent, and Remission of sin from God commonly go together, my discourse shall not separate them: we are now upon the Sinners Plea, and must instance in those that have had the will to sin, the grace to see it, the humility to confess it, and the happiness to be delivered from it. David is famous for his transgressions, his confessions, and his lamentations; *I acknowledged my sins unto thee, Psal. 32. 7. and my iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my transgressions.*

*Cum Dominus diceret ad Adam, ubi es? peccato transgressionis primi Parentes corrupti a Domino sunt requisiti de culpa, ut peccatum quod transgrediendo commiserant, confitendo delerent. Greg.*

*Ἀπορώς διδὼς ὅτι διὰ τῆς ὁμολογίας τῶ πλάτματος ἀποτίναται τὸ πημύημα· τὸτο γὰρ ἔθθη αὐτῷ ἀναθεῖν καὶ ἐξ ἀρχῆς, τὴν ὁμολογίαν ἀπαλεῖν παρ' ἡμῶν καὶ ἡμαρτημένων, καὶ τότε τὴν συγχώρησιν παρέχειν.— Δέον· εἰπεῖν τὸ γεγονός, καὶ δεῖξαι πρὸς ἰατρὰ τὸ ἔλκεθ, καὶ δεῖξαι τὰ παρ' αὐτοῦ φάρμακα. Chrys. in Gen. 3. 9. tom. I. p. 130.*

gressions un'o the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin : where we see confession hath not onely the promise, but performance of forgiveness annexed thereunto, and that from Him who is most bountiful in his promises, and most faithful in his performances, & *tu remisisti*, whose absolution is ever of force, for he never turns a wrong key. 2. Note also the manner thereof; *David* had not yet made his confession, it was onely *in voto*, in purpose and conception, not *in re*, an actual performance, yet his success is crowned with performance, and that will accepted for the deed ; so much is Gods mercy more forward than mans duty, as to grant the pardon before it be

*Velox in ore nondum erat, sed auris Dei jam in corde erat.* Aug. in Psal. 31.

*Vide quomodo velox sit Dei misericordia erga peccatorem, nondum confitetur ut audiat homo, sed confiteri promittit, quod audit Deus.* Ludolph. in Psal. 31.

*Dixi deliberasti apud me quod confitebor, & tu remisisti: miseri pietas Dei! que ad solam promissionem peccata dimisit, votum enim pro operatione judicatur.* Cassiodor. in Psal. 31.

asked. *The word was not at my mouth, and Gods ear was at my heart*, saith Aug. in the person of *David*, and much to the same sense a later Expositor. *Behold with what speed the mercy of God makes toward a sinner, he had not confessed so that man might hear, but promised to confess, which God heareth.* To the same purpose *Cassiodore*; *I said, that is, I deliberated with my self how I will confess,*

*and thou forgavest. O the goodness of God! forgiving sins upon promise onely: for with him the will is of equal acceptance with the deed.* And lest we should think that this was some peculiar privilege vouchsafed unto the *Man after Gods own heart*, the same sweet finger of *Israel* doth presently enlarge his note, and inferreth this general conclusion thereupon, for *this shall every one that is Godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found*, verse 6. The godly in this world are not so godly, but there are times also when they must go to this Confession, and comfort themselves with this hope, for we are not *Angels*, but

*οὐκ ἄγγελοι ἄνθρωποι, καὶ ἐσμεν ἀλλ' ἄνθρωποι, καὶ ἵπνημεθα, καὶ παλιν ἀγρυπνοῦμεν.* *Basil. hom. πρὸς Μελαριαν.* pag. 245. *græc. Basilea.*

Let us pass from the Father to the Son, in whom all ages have and shall admire how so fair a star could fall in so foul an eclipse, yet he recovered his lost light, and of a great sinner proved a great Convert, and as *Chronicles* mention the folly of this King, so *Ecclesiastes* relates the repentance of this Preacher. He delivers a general rule; *He that hides his sin shall not prosper, but he that confesseth, and forsaketh them shall find mercy.* Prov. 28.13. Wherein observe a necessary adjunct to Confession, viz. *forsaking of sin.* It is not then a naked verbal confession that hath this efficacy, or such a compendious way of healing, and no more; but go shew thy self and thy sins to the Priest, and thy attrition shall become contrition, and thy sins shall be forgiven, though not clean forsaken. This Roman device Solomon for all his knowledge (and that extended from the Cedar to the Thistle) was yet to seek of, for with *Tiburine Impostors*, though a man bring not so much as that drop of sorrow for sin by them termed attrition, but onely a will to confess, and utter the story of his lewd life to a Priest, with an intent to be absolved by him, there is required no more to be set free from sin; the Sacrament of Penance will supply all other defects, and confer this benefit *mero motu* of its own accord, without any good disposition, or desert of the Receiver, insomuch that he need to put his ghostly Father to no farther trouble than this, *Speak the word only, and I shall be healed.* By this new fetch, the Sacrament of Penance is available without Repentance, Confession without Contrition, and sin forgiven which is not forsaken. *An opinion* (saith Gabriel) *much to be esteemed, if it were laid upon the foundation of the Scriptures and holy Fathers: and no gallant* (I think) but would embrace it, to come off from sin at so easie a hand. But see the ill luck of a thing, it wants both *Scriptures* and *Fathers* to support it; for in the Scripture it is, *He that confesseth and forsaketh his sinne, which* Observa quod addit, Qui confitetur & deserit; neq; enim satis est confiteri. Menoch. in Prov. 28.

*Non solum attritus recipit gratiam delictum peccatum, tanquam per virtutem meriti de congruo, sed non habens talem actum qui sufficiat ad meritum de congruo, sed tamen habens voluntatem suscipiendi sacramentum Ecclesie; & sine obice peccati actualiter in facto, vel in voluntate inherentis, suscipit non ex merito, sed ex pacto divino effectum istius sacramenti.* Scotus lib. 4. dist. 14.

*Ista opinio esset valde acceptanda, si haberet firmamentum Scripture & sanctorum Patrum.* Biel. lib. 4. dist. 14. qu. 2. not. 2.

will not stand with *Scetus* learning, without the help of an *Index Expurgatorius* to expunge the later clause.

The *Jesuits* would fain interpret *Solomon* of confession made unto Man, and not unto God; and his reasons for it are,  
1. *The words*, He that hideth his sin, *because sins unconfessed are*

*Quia nullus est, qui scelera sua à Deo se abscondere posse cretat, nisi forte insaniat; sed ab hominibus, vel ob pudorem, vel alia de causa, multi peccata sua abscondita esse cupiunt,--- Erubescencia apud homines locum habet, non Deum.* Bel. lib. de pœn. c. 11. p. 1387.

*not hidden from God, but Man; for none can be of so mad a belief, as to think God seeth them not.* 2. *Shame, or some other cause may hold them in from disclosing sin to Man, but none are ashamed to make God privy to their lewdness.* But how untrue the former

reason is, may appear in the case of the two first sinners, *Adam*, who hid himself from God, and *Cain*, who denyed his sin to God. Madmen indeed they were to doe so, but so they did. And an ancient *Bishop* is of the mind, that many besides them in the world are stricken with that phrenzie, *That God doth not re-*

*undè puto quòd hæc in illo (Cain) jam tùm opinio fuerit quæ nunc in multis est, Deum terrestria non respicere, & actus sceleratorum hominum non videre.* Salvian. de gubernat. Dei. lib. 1. pag. 21. Paris. 1617. Πάyla ἰδὼν Διὸς ὀφθαλμοὺς, & πάντα νοήσας. *Hesiod.*

*gard earthly affaires, and seeth not the actions of sinfull men.* They hide them in their own opinion and fancie, whereas in truth they doe not, no more then when the Fool winks, and thinks no man seeth him: for all things are open to his sight, and with him there is no darknesse at all. And

how frivolous and false the later part of the *Cardinals* argument is, viz. *That in confession before God there is no place for shame, and sinners shamelesse therein*, another ancient *Bishop*

*Non erubescamus fateri Domino peccata nostra; Pudor est ut unusquisq. crimina sua prodatur, sed ille pudor agrum suum arat, spinas tollit perpetuas, sentes amputat, &c.* Ambros. de pœnit. l. 2. c. 1.

shall witnesse: *Let us not be ashamed (saith Ambrose) to confesse our sins unto God; it is a shame indeed for any man to lay open his offences, but such a shame that breaks up the fallow ground of his heart, pulls up the thorns, and pares*

*away the bryers, &c.* A shame then there is in Confession, and that before God; but such a shame, as considering what good comes thereof, we should not be ashamed of. Yea the same *Father* supposeth to be in many offenders a greater shame to

con-

confesse before God than man, for thus he writeth: *Can it be well taken, that thou shouldst blush to*

*intreat God, that dost not blush to intreat man; and that thou shouldst be ashamed to make thy supplication to God, from Whom thou thyself not hid, whereas thou art not ashamed to con-*

*fesse thy sins unto a man, from whom they are concealed? And the same holy Prelate in another place enervates both the Cardinals pretences; his words are remarkable. Why art thou afraid*

*to confesse thy iniquities to so good a Lord? Declare (saith he) thy sins that thou mayst be justified. To the person as yet guilty of sin, Justification is promised for a reward; for he is justified, that of his own mind acknowledgeth his offence. And a just man at the entrance of his speech is his own accuser. The Lord knoweth all, but expecteth thy voice, not with an intent to punish, but to pardon; it is not his will that the Devil should insult over thee*

*concealing thy sins, be therefore thy accuser by thine own accusation, and fear not any accuser, if thou shalt arraign thy self. Wherein we may observe, That in Confession unto God there is dread, which this holy man dissuadeth from, and concealment of sin, as some fondly imagine, and an expectancy of vocall evidence, though God be ignorant of nothing. To him then doth Solomon direct our Confession, for all the Cardinal hath yet said to the contrary.*

And he had hereof a living example in his father David, whose Penitential Psalms, what are they but prescript forms of Confession, where there are as many sighs as words, mingling his cries with weeping? all the verses standing chiefly upon two feet, Contrition and Confession; some whereof were composed for his remembrance, by name Psal. 37. which is διδασκαλία τῆς ἐξομολογήσεως, an Instruction for Confession, as S. Basil

\* intitles it; that having this Psalm alwayes before his eyes, he might

*An quisquam scire ut erubescas Deum rogare, qui non erubescis rogare hominem? & pudeat te Deo supplicare quem non lates, cum te non pudeat peccata tua homini quem lateas confiteri? Id. ib. c. 10.*

*Quid vereris apud bonum Dominum tuas iniquitates fateri? Dic (inquit) iniquitates tuas ut iustificeris; adhuc reo culpæ iustificationis præmia proponuntur: ille enim iustificatur qui proprium crimen sponte agnoverit; denique iustus in exordio sermonis accusator est sui. Novit omnia Dominus, sed expectat vocem tuam, non ut puniat, sed ut ignoscat; non vult ut insultet tibi diabolus, & celantem peccata tua arguat; prævenies accusatorem tuum, si te ipse accusaveris; accusatorem nullum timebis, si te detuleris ipse. Amb. li. 2. de pœnit. c. 7.*

\* ἰλασκεῖται ἡ ἀγαθὴν κρείον τὰς μεθ' ἑσθραλλύσεως ἐξομολογήσεως παναῖς. Basil. in Psal. 36. p. 97.

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*tents.* A better glosse that, than another Fryers, *Reveal thy way unto God*, that is, unto the Priest, who is in Gods stead; which harps not in *David's* tune, except God and the Priest have one and the same *consistory*, as the *Canonists* say God and the Pope have. My God will I trust with my sinnes, upon whom I trust, and if sin be my way, to him will I commit it; to the Spring-head will I have recourse for mercy, where the stream

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flows the fuller and the clearer. He is my Physician, and to him will I open my wounds; He is the party wronged, with him will I make my peace; He knoweth the very secrets of my heart, before him then I will pour forth mine; He it is that invites me a sinner unto him, and to him will I hasten, nor be

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And this Confession of sin unto God is insisted upon by the Rabbins, in the book called ירמיה of Dayes; and in the chapter יום הכפורים of the day of propitiations, is extant this passage, *R. Isaac said, Come and see, how the manner and custome of the Lord holy and blessed is not as the manner of flesh and blond; for the manner of flesh and blond is, that if a man have offended his neighbour, sometimes he may please him with words, and sometimes he cannot please him with words alone. But the manner of*

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cap. 8.

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the holy and blessed God is not so, for in transgressing man transgresseth, and yet pacifieth him with words, as it is said, Hosea 14.

1. O Israel return unto the Lord, for thou hast fallen by thy iniquity, take with you WORDS and turn unto the Lord; and not onely this, but he conferreth mercy upon him, as it is said in the words following, Say unto him, take away all our iniquity and receive us graciously. Not onely this but the Scripture hath it, as if he should offer calves in sacrifice, as it is said afterwards, So will we render the calves of our lips; peradventure thou wilt say the Calves of sin, that which followeth teacheth what is to be said to this; I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely. In which testimony we see that the calves of our lips are the confession of our sins: that in confession our wounds are healed, and we in God beloved. So in *Misdraas Tehillim*, that is, exposition of the Psalmes, on the title of the hundred Psalmes, *Yaluds eis Ezechias*, a Psalm of Confession; This is that which is written, He that hideth his sins shall not prosper, but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall find mercy. He that hideth his sins,

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Under the Gospel the same custome hath continued; the *Prodigal son*, that express pledge and hostage for mercy, did but resolve upon Confession to his *dearest Father*, whose speed, embracements and kisses prevented the vocal expression. God who saw him afar off, heard him also what he said (a) *within himself*, and what he said to (b) *himself* also. The prodigal

(a) Luke 15.

18.

(b) 21.

*Prodigus peccavit coram Deo, cui soli dicitur, Tibi soli peccavi, &c. tam cito veniam invenitur, ut venienti adhuc & longe posito occurrat Pater. Ambr. lib. 2. de Pœnit. cap. 4.*

*sinned against God, to whom it is said, against thee onely have I sinned; and obtained so speedy a pardon, that while he was yet afar off, and but on the way, the Father meets him. The poor*

Luke 18. 13,

14.

πιστός ὁ θεός  
καὶ ὁ.

1 John 1. 9.

*Publican* upon his confession fared as well putting up his supplication in the *Temple*, the contents whereof were, *O God be merciful to me a sinner*; and went back to his house justified without making Confession to any other Ghostly Father, but onely the *Father of Spirits*; of whom Saint *John* giveth this assurance, that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; why faithful and just rather then kind and merciful, seeing forgiveness of sins proceedeth from his bounty, not our deserving? indeed it was his mercy to annex forgiveness to Confession, and his justice to reward that which his mercy promised. God is so gracious to promise pardon, upon this condition that a sinner confess; which condition performed, God is faithful and just to make good his promise with actual forgiveness; fail not thou him of confession, and he will never fail thee of forgiveness.

Upon these grounds the *Fathers* direct a Penitent unto God, esteeming the confession made unto him of so great value, as they seem to make but small account of that which is made to man, leaving it as a thing indifferent to be undertaken as the sinner finds occasion. But he that praiseth Gold, must not be thought to dispraise silver; and those Ancients that approve of Confession to God in the first place, allow the same in its place to man also. Testimonies of both sorts are extant in their writings, and to the former for the present thus. *Clemens Romanus*. It is better (saith he) for a man to confess his sins then to *μάλιν*, ἢ σλειῖναι τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ. ἀπερσθεὶς (ἀδελφοί) ὁ δεσπότης ὑπάρχει ἡμῖν ἀπάντων, ἐὰν ἐλεῖς χεῖρα, εἰ μὴ τὸ ἐξομολογήσῃς αὐτῷ. *Clemens. Epist. 1. ad Corinth p. 66, 67.*

Καλὸν ἀν-  
θρώπῳ ἐξομο-  
λογεῖσθαι πρὸς  
θεὸν ἂν ἀμαρ-  
τῶν αὐτοῦ.

hardin

harden his heart, like those which resisted Moses, &c. then tells us how desirous God is hereof. *The Lord (my Brethren) needs nothing else, is desirous of nothing from any man, save to confess unto him*; then follow certain proofs from the Scripture, shewing how acceptable a Sacrifice confession is, as well in praising God, as in dispraising of our selves; that is the *Sacrifice of thanksgiving*, and the other of a *wounded spirit*. *Clemens of Rome* is seconded with our Christian *Athenaus, Clemens of Alexandria*, who writeth thus: *If a Christian through the suggestions of the Adversary unwillingly fall into sin, let him in imitation of David sing, I will confess unto the Lord, and it shall please him better then a young calf that bringeth horns and hoofs; let the poor be hld. and be glad, for he saith, offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Lord; and call upon me in the day of thy affliction, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me; for the sacrifice of God is a wounded spirit*.

A saying so like unto the former, that I guess this *Clemens* took it (as he did some other passages) from the former. These *Primitive Men* style confession a Sacrifice, and we know of what kind of adoration sacrifices are, and to whom they appertain: surely a broken heart presented by confession, and laid upon the Altar of the *Cross*, is never rejected by God for his sake who suffered thereupon. *Origen* a disciple to this last *Clemens*, and his immediate successor in the

(a) Ecclesiastical School at Alexandria, is frequent in exhorting sinners to all kinds of confession, but earnest for that which is made unto God. *The Devil* (saith he) *first allureth to sin, next accuseth for sin*; We prevent his malice by being our own accusers; *Ipse nos ut peccamus infirmat, sed & David in Psalmo dicit, iniquitatem meam notam feci, &c. vide ergo quia pronunciare peccatum remissionem peccati meretur, si ipse nobis sumus accusatores, proficit nobis ad salutem; si vero expectemus ut a Diabolo accusemur, accusatio illa cedat nobis ad poenam.* Origen. homil. 3. in Levit. and.

Θυσία { ἀνέσεως.  
πνεύματι  
συνειλεγμένον.

Ἦν δ' καὶ πεπεισὴ ἄνθρωποι τινὲς  
 πείσασθαι διὰ τὰς παρεμβάσεις τῶν ἀντι-  
 κειμένων μαθησάμενοι· **Θ** δὲ **Δαβὶδ** **βασιλεὺς**  
 Ἐξομολογήσασθαι τῷ Κυρίῳ, καὶ ἀρέσει  
 ὑποὺς ἐπὶ τοσούτον ὡς ἐφάνη **κέρει** καὶ  
 ὁπλᾶς· ἐβόησαν πλωχοὶ καὶ ἐννεύοντες ἦτο-  
 σαν, λέγει γὰρ, **Θ**ς τῷ **Θεῷ** **βοήσαν**  
**αἰνέσεις**, καὶ ἀποδὲς τῷ κυρίῳ τὰς **εὐχὰς**  
 σου, καὶ ἐπικάλειται με ἐν ἡμέρᾳ· **θλίβε**  
 αὶ σου, καὶ ἐξέλθοι σε, καὶ δόξά σου με· **βοή**  
 σια γὰρ τῷ **Θεῷ** **συνέμελλας** συνέμελλον·  
**Cl. m. Alex. Strom. l. 4. p. 378.**

Under the Gospel the same custome hath continued; the *Prodigal son*, that expres pledge and hostage for mercy, did but resolve upon Confession to his dearest *Father*, whose speed, embracements and kisses prevented the vocal expression. God who saw him afar off, heard him also what he said (a) *within himself*, and what he said to (b) *himself* also. The prodigal

(a) *Luke* 15.  
18.  
(b) 21.

*Prodigus peccavit coram Deo, cui soli dicuntur, Tibi soli peccavi, &c. tam cito veniam invenitur, ut venienti adhuc & longè posito occurrat Pater. Ambr. lib. 2. de Pœnit. cap. 4.*

sinned against God, to whom it is said, against thee onely have I sinned; and obtained so speedy a pardon, that while he was yet afar off, and but on the way, the *Father* meets him. The poor

*Luke* 18.13,  
14.

πιστε εἰς  
καὶ  
I *John* 1.9.

*Publican* upon his confession fared as well putting up his supplication in the *Temple*, the contents whereof were, *O God be merciful to me a sinner*; and went back to his house justified without making Confession to any other Ghostly Father, but onely the *Father of Spirits*; of whom Saint *John* giveth this assurance, that if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; why faithful and just rather then kind and merciful, seeing forgiveness of sins proceedeth from his bounty, not our deserving? indeed it was his mercy to annex forgiveness to Confession, and his justice to reward that which his mercy promised. God is so gracious to promise pardon, upon this condition that a sinner confess; which condition performed, God is faithful and just to make good his promise with actual forgiveness; fail not thou him of confession, and he will never fail thee of forgiveness.

Upon these grounds the *Fathers* direct a Penitent unto God, esteeming the confession made unto him of so great value, as they seem to make but small account of that which is made to man, leaving it as a thing indifferent to be undertaken as the sinner finds occasion. But he that praiseth Gold, must not be thought to dispraise silver; and those Ancients that approve of Confession to God in the first place, allow the same in its place to man also. Testimonies of both sorts are extant in their writings, and to the former for the present thus. *Clemens Romanus*. It is better (saith he) for a man to confess his sins then to μάλα, ἢ σκεπτεῖναι τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ. ἀπερσθεὶς (ἀδελφοί) ὁ δεσπότης ὑπάρχει τῷ ἀπάντων, ἐὰν ἀδελὸς χεῖρῃ, εἰ μὴ τὸ ἐξομολογῆσθαι αὐτῷ. *Clemens. Epist. 1. ad Corinth p. 66, 67.*

καλὸν ἀν-  
θρώπῳ ἐξομο-  
λογεῖσθαι πρὸς  
τὸν ἀμαρτη-  
νῶν

harden



harden his heart, like those which resisted Moses, &c. then tells us how desirous God is hereof. The Lord (my Brethren) needs nothing else, is desirous of nothing from any man, (save to confess unto him; then follow certain proofs from the Scripture, shewing how acceptable a Sacrifice confession is, as well in praising God, as in dispraising of our selves; that is the Sacrifice of thanksgiving, and the other of a wounded spirit.) Clemens of Rome is seconded with our Christian Athenaus, Clemens of Alexandria, who writeth thus: If a Christian through the suggestions of the Adversary unwillingly fall into sin, let him in imitation of David sing, I will confess unto the Lord, and it shall please him better then a young calf that bringeth horns and hoofs; let the prior be hld. and be glad, for he saith, offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows unto the Lord; and call upon me in the day of thy affliction, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me; for the sacrifice of God is a wounded spirit.

A saying so like unto the former, that I guess this Clemens took it (as he did some other passages) from the former. These Primitive Men style confession a Sacrifice, and we know of what kind of adoration sacrifices are, and to whom they appertain: surely a broken heart presented by confession, and laid upon the Altar of the Cross, is never rejected by God for his sake who suffered thereupon. Origen, his disciple to this last Clemens, and his immediate successor in the

(a) Ecclesiastical School at Alexandria, is frequent in exhorting sinners to all kinds of confession, but earnest for that which is made unto God. The Devil (saith he) first allureth to sin, next accuseth for sin; We prevent his malice by being our own accusers, si ipsi nostri accusatores simus, nequitiam accusatoris effugimus; dicit al' cubi Propheta, dic tu iniquitates tuas prior ut iustificeris; nonne evidenter mysterium ostendit, cum dicit, Dic tu prior—tu ergo dic prior, ne te ill' preveniat—. sed & David in Psalmo dicit, iniquitatem meam notam feci, &c. vide ergo quia pronunciare peccatum remissionem peccati meretur, — si ipsi nostri sumus accusatores, proficit nobis ad salutem; si vero expectemus ut à Diabolo accusetur, accusatio illa cedit nobis ad poenam. Origen, homil. 3. in Levit. and

ἀνέσεις.  
Θυσία } πνεύματι  
          } συνλελειμένον.

Ἦν ὃ καὶ περὶ τὴν ἁμάρτιαν τοιαύτην τινα πείρασόν διὰ τὰς παρεμπιπτάσεις τῶ ἀντι-  
κειμένου. μιμησάμενοι ὁ Δαβὶδ ψάλλει,  
Ἐξομολογήσομαι τῷ Κυρίῳ, καὶ ἀρέσει  
αὐτῷ ὑπὲρ μόχον νεὸν φέροντα κέσσια καὶ  
ὀπλὰς ἰδέσθωσαν πτωχοὶ καὶ εὐφρανθήτω-  
σαν, λέγει γὰρ, Οὗτος τῷ Θεῷ θυσίαν  
ἀνέσεις, καὶ ἀποδὲς τῷ Κυρίῳ τὰς εὐχὰς  
σου, καὶ ἐπικάλῃσαι με ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψε-  
ως σου, καὶ ἐξελεύμαι σε, καὶ δοξάσεις με θυ-  
σία γὰρ τῷ Θεῷ πνεῦμα συνλελειμένον.  
Cl. m. Alex. Strom. l. 4. p. 378.

and by taking this office forth of his hands. The Prophet in a place saith, Declare thy iniquities beforehand that thou mayest be justified: there is a mystrie in these words, Dic tu prior, declare thou first, lest he step in before thee—. Even so David in the Psalme; Mine iniquities (saith he) have I made known unto thee, and have not hid my sin; I said I will confess, &c. See how the uttering of sin obtains forgiveness, it will further our salvation to become our own accusers; but if we delay till the Devil accuseth, it will make much for our condemnation. Now to him must this confession be poured out who forgave Davids sins; although I must not conceal how Origen alloweth of confession before some sorts of men also, and that without any gainsaying from me, as in due place shall appear. And to this confession, orall expression is not so requisite; God knoweth the language of the heart, and heareth the voice of weeping, that heard Annah praying and not speaking, who reads our minds in our thoughts, with whom tears, and sighes, and groans are formal evidences. This manner of unfolding our souls to God, St Basil upon the words of the Psalmist, *I have roared for the disquietness of my heart*, hath fully described in Davids person thus; *I do not open my lips in confession, thereby to make a shew to many, but inwardly within my heart closing up mine eye, to thee onely beholding things in secret, do I discover the groans that are within me, roaring within my self; nor is there need of many words to this confession, for with thee the groans of my heart are sufficient for this acknowledgment, and those lamentations sent forth from the depth of my soul unto thee my God.*

μη τῇ γλώτ-  
τῃ λέγομεν  
μόνον, ἀλλὰ  
καὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ.  
*Chrys. hom.*  
*31. ad Heb.*  
ἡθιχ.

Οὐ γὰρ ἵνα  
τοῖς πολλοῖς  
φανερῶς γέ-  
νωμαι, τοῖς  
χείλεσιν ἐξο-  
μολογῶμαι,  
ἐνδόν δ' ἐν  
αὐτῇ καρδίᾳ τὸ ὄμμα μόνον, σοι μόνῳ τὸ βλέποντι ἐν κρυπτῷ, τὰς ἐν ἐμαυτῷ στεναγ-  
μὸς ἐπιδεικνύω, ἐν ἑμαυτῷ ὀρυόμενος. ἔδὲ γὰρ μακρῶς μοι λόγων χρεία ἦν πρὸς  
τὴν ἐξομολόγησιν, καὶ οἱ ἀπὸ βάθους ψυχῆς πρὸς σε ἢ δεδὸν ἀναπεμπόμενοι ὀδυρμοί.  
*Basil, in Ps. lxx. p. 100. græc. Basilea 1551.*

And look what Saint Basil ascribeth to the groaning of the heart, the same doth Saint Ambrose to the tears of the Penitent, and notes that no other Confession of Saint Peter after his denial is upon record, but that which flowed from his eyes, thus, *I finde that he wept, I find not what he said, I read of his tears,*

tears, I read of no satisfaction; Peter took a good course to weep, and to be silent, for that which is bewayled is not wont to be excused, and that which cannot be defended, may be elcnsed; tears wash away the sin which the tongue is ashamed to confess, tears therefore provide for shame, and safety; blush not to intreat, and obtain by intreating. Tears (I say) are a kind of tacite prayers, asking not forgiveness, yet obtaining: they set not forth vocally the cause, yet gain the mercy; yea, the supplication of tears is of greater profit then any words can be; words happily may fail us in prayers, which tears never do, for the tongue doth not alway open our case fully, but tears ever disclose our affections to the full. To God then doth the same Doctor exhort us to disclose our sins. Let us be subject unto God, that we may not be subject unto sin: Let us call our offences unto remembrance, and be ashamed of them, as a disgrace, and not boast thereof as the manner of some is. We have a good Lord that would pardon all. If therefore thou wouldst be justified, confess thy sin, for a modest, and shameful confession of sin loseth the bands thereof. Thou seest what thy God exacteth of thee, and with what a promise of forgiveness he provoketh thee unto Confession.

Led with this promise, and invited with this call, the Golden-mouthed Dr John Chrysostome exhorteth the people to resort to God onely in confession, little regarding that which is made to man, and leaving it as a thing indifferent, as a thing to be used or not, at the Penitents discretion, which the most rigid of the Reformed side stick not at, yea he seems at least in words to disavow it, which is more than the Moderate sort of them  
I expected,

Invenio quod fleverit, non invenio quid dixerit; lacrimas ejus lego, satisfactionem non lego. Rectè planè Petrus flevit & tacuit, quia quod deseri solet, non solet excusari, & quod defendi non potest, abii potest; lavat enim lacrima delictum quod voce pudor est confiteri; lacrimæ credò verecundie paritèr consulunt, & salutì; non crubescunt in petendo, & impetrant in rogando: lacrimæ, inquam, tacite quodammodo preces sunt, veniam non postulant & merentur; causam non dicunt, & misericordiam consequuntur; nisi quòd utiles lacrimarum preces sunt, quàm sermonum, quia sermo imprecando fortè fallit, lacrima omnino non fallit; sermo enim non totum profert negotium, lacrima semper totum prodit affectum. Ambr. de pœnit. Petri, ser. 46.

Subjiciamus nos Deo, ut non subditi sinu peccato, & delictorum nostrorum memoriam recensescentes, tanquam opprobrium erubescamus, non velut quidam, gloriam predicemus. Bonum Dominum habemus qui velit donare omnibus, si vis justificari, fateri delictum tuum, solvit enim criminum nexus verecunda confessio peccatorum. Vides quid à te exigat Deus tuus, vides quàm remissionis pollicitatione te provocat ad confitendum. Ambr. l. 2. de pœn. c. 6.

expected, or can well away with. And a great Scholar, but of the other side, freely acknowledgeth, that *Chrysostome* in divers places, and by name in his 5. Homily of the incomprehensible nature of God hath some unfound passages, denying sinners to be tyed by any law to confesse their sins unto Man, but unto God onely. Well, let us see what it might be that is so great an eye-sore to him, and men of his rank: The first mention that occurreth unto me is in *Lamech* his case, confessing the murder he committed unto his wives, *Hear O ye wives of Lamech*, &c. where expressing elegantly the torture of a raging conscience, the Father sheweth, there is no way but one to quiet the same. He that

*Quæ à Chrysostomo tum aliis in locis, tum Hom. 5. De Incomprehensibili nat. parum commode dicta videntur, ubi peccatores eâ se lege negat obstringere, ut hominibus, sed ut uni Deo peccata fateantur. D. Petavius animadv. in Epiph. hæc. 59. p. 224.*

Ὁ ταῦτα ἐργασάμενος ἐὰν βελήῃ οἱς  
Διὸν χρῆσαί τῇ ἀπὸ τοῦ συνειδήτου  
βοήθῃ, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξομολόγησιν τοῦ πε-  
πεσσομένου ἐπεισθῆναι, καὶ ὡς ἰατρὸν δεῖ-  
αι τὸ ἔλκετος θεραπεύειν, καὶ μὴ ἀνει-  
δίξοντι, καὶ τὰ παρ' ἐκείνου φάρμακα δεξ-  
αί, καὶ μόνον αὐτῷ διαλεχθῆναι, μηδε-  
νὸς ἐιδόει, καὶ πάντα ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἀκριβεί-  
ας, ταχέως ποιήσεται τὴν διόρθωσιν  
τοῦ ἐπ' αἰσμένων· ἡ γὰρ ὁμολογία τοῦ  
ἡμαρτημένων ἀφανισμὸς γίνεται τοῦ  
πλημμελημάτων. *Chrys. λογ. κ. εἰς  
γεν. tom. 1. p. 139.*

Πάντα καὶ ἀκριβείας ἐιδότι — ἐκ ἐπι-  
δαν ἄγνωσθὲ τὴν ὁμολογίαν ἐπιζητεῖτε παν-  
τα ἰδὼς πρὸ γενέσεως αὐτοῦ. *Chrys. ib.*

is guilty of crying sins, and would make good use and be aided by his conscience, and be drawn to confess what he hath committed, and open his wound to such a Physician, that would heal, and not upbraid him, and receive salving plaisters from him, and would confer with him, no one beholding, and declare all things diligently unto him, shall easily rectifie what was amiss; for the confession of a sinner is the abolishing and doing away of his transgression. Now who is meant by this Physician, these words following, he that distinctly knoweth all things, and again, He requireth our Confession not as ignorant, but knowing all things before they were, sufficiently shew, and from

an Homily which bears his name, and title of Repentance, extant in the Latin Edition of his works, it is thus cited by (a) *Chennitius*; It is not necessary to confess in the presence of witnesses, let there be an inquisition made after offences in the thought, let this judgment be without a witness, let God onely see thee confessing. But let us view the Father in his own colours, who

(a) Chennit.  
exam. Concil.  
Trid. part. 2.  
de confes. pag.  
189.

who taking his *thema* from the Confession of the *Publican*, saith

thus: *I beseech you alwaies to make Confession, for I do not bring thee upon the theatre of thy fellow-servants, nor do I compell thee to uncover thy sins unto men; unclass thy conscience before God, shew forth unto him thine actions, and thy wounds, and intreat a medicine from him, set them forth to him, who will not set at naught but cure thee; for albeit thou dost say nothing, he knoweth all things.* The same words are repeated again for failing, tom. 6. pag.

444. which we rather point at, than produce; for where the Father is copious, repetitions are tedious; who further saith,

*But thou art ashamed to say thou hast sinned; utter thy sins in thy daily devotions: What then? I do not say confesse them to thy fellow-servant, for to cast them into thy teeth; confesse them to God that healeth them; for God is not ignorant of them, though thou keep them secret.* So upon mention of those words in the Prophecy of *Esay*, which

ters are thus read, *Declare thy sins first that thou mayst be justified*, he writeth thus; *Tell me, of what art thou ashamed, and blushest at to confesse thy sins? dost thou relate them unto man to reproch thee? or dost thou confesse them to thy fellow-servant to publish them upon the stage? To thy Lord, to him that careth for thee, to him that is kind to man-kind, and to thy Physician thou dost unfold thy grief.* And not many lines after, *I compell thee not (saith God) to come 'Οὐκ ἀναβήσθαι*

lin. 15.

Παρεκαλῶ ἑξομολογῆσαι συνεχῶς, ἕδῃ γὰρ εἰς διατείν σε ἀγῶ τῆς συνδύλων τῆς σῶν, ἕδῃ ἐκκαλεῖσθαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀναγκάζω τὰ ἁμαρτήματά σε· τὸ σωτῆρς ἀναπύζον ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ Θεοῦ, αὐτῷ δειξόν τὰ πρᾶγματα, καὶ τὰ τελέματα, καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ φάρμακα αἰτησον, δειξόν τῷ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντι ἀλλὰ θεραπεύοντι, καὶ γὰρ σιγῆς, θίδεν ἑκάνθ' ἀπαντα. Ἐκ τῶν τελώνων λογ. λθ. tom. 5. pag. 262, 263.

Ἄλλ' αἰγύνῃ εἰπὼν διότι ἥμαρτες, λέγε αὐτὰ καθ' ἡμέραν ἐν τῇ εὐχαρίᾳ· καὶ τι; μὴ γὰρ λέγω, εἴπε τῷ συνδύλῳ τῷ σωτῆρς δειξόντί σε· εἴπε τῷ Θεῷ, τῷ θεραπεύοντι αὐτά, ὃ γὰρ ἐάν μὴ εἴπῃς ἀγνοῶν αὐτὰ ὁ Θεός. Ἑρμην. εἰς ψαλ. v. tom. 2. p. 708.

in the LXXII. Interpre. *Esay* 43. 26.

Τίνθ γὰρ ἐνεκεν αἰγύνῃ καὶ ἐρυθειᾶς, εἴπε μοι, τὰ ἁμαρτήματα εἴπῃς; μὴ γὰρ ἀνδρώπῳ λέγεις ἵνα ὀνειδίσῃ σε; μὴ γὰρ τῷ σωτῆρῳ ὁμολογῆς ἵνα ἐμπομπήσῃ; τῷ θεσπότη τῷ κηδεμόνι, τῷ φιλανθρώπῳ, τῷ ἰατρῷ τὸ τεῖχος ἐπιεικύνεις. εἰς Λαζαρ. λογ. δ. λογ. λη. tom. 5. p. 258.

*sins alone in private, so I Will heal thy wound, and free thee from pain. Also the same Father upon the same subject in another place adviseth, not to call our selves sinners only, but to call to*

Μὴ ἀμαρτολὸς καλῶμεν ἑαυτὸς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ ἀμαρτήματα ἀναλογιζόμεθα καὶ ἐν ᾧ ἕκαστος ἀναλέγων ἑλπίσιν ἐκτόμπυστον σ' αὐτὸν, ἵνα πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις κατηγορήσῃ, ἀλλὰ πείθεσθαι συμβεβηκέναι τῷ περὶ τὴν λέγοντι, Ἄποκάλυψον τὰ κρυφὰ τὴν ὁδὸν σου, ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ ταῦτα ὁμολόγησον, ἐπὶ τῷ Δικαστῇ ὁμολόγηται τὰ ἀμαρτήματα, εὐχόμενος, εἰ καὶ μὴ γλώτῃ ἀλλὰ τῇ μνήμῃ. περὶ Ἐβραίων λογ. κα. tom. 4 pag. 589.

Οὐ τὸτο ὃ μόνον ἐστὶ θαυμαστὸν, ὅτι εἰσὶν ἡμῖν τὰ ἀμαρτήματα, ἀλλ' ὅτι αὐτὰ ἐν ἐκκαλύπτει, ἐν ποιεῖ αὐτὰ φανερά, καὶ δεῖα, ἐν ἀναγκάζει παρελθόντας εἰς μέσον ἐξαιπὼν τὰ πεπλημμελλόμενα, ἀλλ' αὐτῷ μόνῳ ἀπολογίσασθαι κέλαι, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐξομολογήσασθαι. Ἀνδρέαν, κα. tom. 6. pag. 608. lin. 10.

*mind our sins, and rehearsing every one in particular: I say not proclaim thy self upon the Theatre, nor accuse thy self in the audience of others, but I counsel thee to be persuaded by the Prophet, saying, Reveal thy way unto the Lord. Confess thy sins unto God, confess them before the Judge, praying, if not in thy tongue yet in thy memory. And (to say no more) this was his Pulpit-discourse to the people of Antioch. And this not onely to be marvelled at (saith he) that he forgiveth us our sins, but that he neither discloseth them, nor laieth them open, or maketh them manifest, nor forceth us to come forth in open view to speak out our offences, but commandeth us to be answerable for them to him alone, and to him to make our confession. These ἀπανθίσματα, several flowers, (and far more than these) are gathered from this spiritual garden of Saint*

*Chrysostome. The Church of Rome cannot well endure the breath and smell thereof. The Cardinal would limit his testimonies to publick confession, which is the Theatre and stage so often mentioned, and so subject to obloquy, but not of clancular confession subject to no such inconvenience; surely Chrysostome spake of the confession then in use, which was performed after one way, and whether private or publick, there's the doubt. Besides, if the Patriarch had excluded the publick Theatre and not the private Closet of Confession, why did he repeat to God alone, to him onely confess, and not to thy fellow servant? They aver under those words, To God alone, to be comprised the Ghostly Father also, who for the time is not*

*Loquitur de confessione publica, ex qua exprobatio sequi solebat. Bel. l. 2. de Pœn. c. 15.*



for much Man as Gods Deputy. Upon which ground they resolve, That if a Confessor be interrogated upon his Oath of a matter revealed in Confession, he may with

a safe conscience deny it, because he did not heare the same as Man, but as God.

A resolution very prejudiciall to the Fundamentall Lawes of State, as in due place shall be shewed. Others

confesse more ingeniously, That it was the doctrine of the Times, and of that Church wherein he lived, and that he was swayed and carryed a-

way with the same. The Frier might have enlarged himself, for it was the opinion not of those times, but of all times in the Greek Church, and so continued till the times of Gratian. The

Dean of Lervain makes him onely to connive and wink at the misse and discontinuance of auricular confession, by reason of a contrary custome introduced by his Predecessor within his Diocese.

Whatsoever it was, this great Father and glory of Greece is scarce heard with patience amongst the Pontificians, yet it may be wondred, with what confidence himself and his fellows are produced by them, alleaging them with like sincerity as they paint them at Rome, viz. with head and beard shaven, Mitred, Coped, and armed with Crosser-staffe, after the Roman cut and fashion; whereas the long beard, and long robe were the usuall ornaments of those Eastern Prelates, the former accoutrements of Mitre and Crosse not invented nor frequented in their times.

But what say the Fathers of the Western Church, since the same Sun that riseth in the East, setteth in the West, and casteth the same beams upon both the Climates. The solemn discipline of open Penance continued longer in the Latine Church than in the other, and at length sate down also in private confession.

Ex exhomologesi seu penitentia actu (nisi multum fallimur) confessio secreta sumpsit originem. B. Rheman.

Quidam dicunt quod potest dicere, se nescire ut homo, sed ut Deus. Sum. Angl. v. confess. Potest dicere sine lesione conscientie se nescire quod scit tantum ut Deus. Aquin. supplem. 3æ part. Qu. 11. Art. 1.

Sui temporis sententia fuit, in quo Nestarius confessionem sacramentalem abjecerat. Canus Relect. de pœn. p. 964.

Gratian, de Pœn. dist. 1. cap. ult. Quid.

Fortè dici possit Chrysost. aliquantulum connivere propter consuetudinem appositam quam per Nestarium prædecessorem suum introducit in invenerat. R. Tapper. art. 5. p. 98.

Les ont fait pourtraire, & imprimer à Rome, ayant la barbe raze, estant Mitrés, & revestus des habits Pontificaux, à la façon de nos Prelatz Latines. Les Mitres & Cosses n'estoient lors encor en usage. A. Theut. v. c. des Rommes illust. livre 1. c. 9.

Ex exhomologesi seu penitentia actu

I have acquainted you what *Erasmus* his opinion was, That the Confession of speciall sins before God was private onely, and that onely made to men was publick, *a vieu & seu le tous*, as the *French*-man speaks, exposed to the sight and light of all, and that the *Church* was acquainted with no other in *Saint Hieroms* dayes; sure no other was on foot in *Tertullians* time, as a great Antiquary of his time *Beatus Rhenanus* affirmeth, That *Tertullians* silence in speaking nothing of clancular confession is no wonder, which (as he conjectureth) was the daughter of publick confession, conceived by the voluntary piety of some men, that thought to secret sins there belonged private Confession, and

Ne quis admiretur Tertullianum de clancularia ista admissorum confessione nihil loquutum, quæ (quantum conicimus) nata est ex isti exhumillogesi per ultroqueam hominum pietatem, ut occultorum peccatorum esset & exomologesis occulta. Pref. ad lib. de Pœn.

Quid mihi cum hominibus ut audiant confessiones meas; quasi ipsi sanaverunt sunt omnes languores meos? Aug. Con. 1. 10. c. 3.

Confessio de qua loquitur Aug. non est confessio Sacramentalis, sed confessio peccatorum preteritorum, & per baptismum dimissorum, ad eum finem instituta, ut inde cogoscatur & laudatur Dei misericordia. Lib. 2. de pœn. c. 20.

Confessionis autem causam addidit, dicens, quia fecisti, Authorem scilicet universitatis Domini esse confusus, nulli alii docens confitendum, quam qui fecit Olivam fructiferam spei misericordie in seculum seculi. Hilary in Psal. 51.

a concealed Penance, as notorious sins were punished with open repentance, and confession. Yet the duty may be of good use, though not of so great standing in Gods Church; as *Paul* was born out of due time, yet called to be an Apostle, whose fervent labour in the Ministry supplied that defect. As that *Critick* wondered not at *Tertullians* silence, so may none wonder at *St Augustines* words. What have I to do with men that they should hear my confessions, as though they could heal all my diseases? A place that *Bellarmine* hath said something to, though not much

to his purpose. The Confession *Saint Augustine* speaketh of is not Sacramental confession (he may swear it) but a rehearsal of sins formerly committed, and washed away by Baptisme, acknowledged to this end, that the mercy of God towards him might be manifested.

This is the scope of his whole discourse (I grant,) namely, a detection of his great sins, and of Gods great mercy; yet he might relate how his sins met with mercy, and so speak of Confession to God, as a mean for the obtaining thereof, and affirm that man had no more right to know his diseases than he had power to heal them. Such a conclusion hath *Hilary* upon *Psalm LI*. That *David* there teacheth us to confesse our sins

to no other than to the Author of this universe, the Lord who made him, and maketh the Olive fruitful with the mercy of hope for ever and ever.

Such testimonies as these seem to import that confessions before God and before man are incompatible, as if thereby two Masters were served, and the one forsaken by adhering to the other; that confession peculiarly belongeth unto God, and is not to be given to any other. Truly such a Confession that is made to man without any subordination unto God, is derogatory both to Gods glory, and our own safety: So to confess unto any besides, as to *rely* upon him, is not expiatory, but piaculous, and not a confession but a malediction. But to use confession before man, 1. as an help the better to enable us to confess unto God; 2. or to man as an instrument in the place, and hand of God, is not repugnant thereunto; 3. to confess to man wholly, and to leave out God; 4. or to imagine that unfeigned confession made before God is insufficient, without respect had unto the confession made to man, either in purpose, or performance, as the accomplishment thereof, is the *Hagar* that must not abide with the *Free woman*, but be *cast out and her son*, that is, such consequents as the *Roman Polemicks* draw from thence. It was a Calumniation fastned upon our Church, that it should teach *Baptisme* without *Confirmation* to be imperfect, or that at least *Confirmation* added no small matter to the strength and virtue thereof. Which Scandal the God-like wisdom of his late Majesty was upon (a) sound information the sponge to wipe away; that it was neither a sacrament, nor a corroboration to a former Sacrament, but an examination with a Confirmation. The Confession had to man must not be thought to perfect that which is had to God; or to be a Sacrament, or a Confirmation of any Sacrament, by way of corroboration, but by way of examination onely, where the sin confessed unto God is examined, and if upon due examination the confession made to God shall appear to be good, the same is ratified; if not, the party dismissed with better instructions to perfect the same. And like as the *Parliament* assembled in the first year of King *James*, made an *Act* for the confirmation of his Royal title, whereas in truth his title was as firm as God & nature could make

Gal. 4.30.

Conference at  
Hampton Court.  
pag. 10. ed.  
1625.

(a) Of Ll.  
Arch-Bishop  
of Cant. and  
Bishop of  
London.

make it, thereby expressing rather their duty to imbrace the same, than adding strength and vigour thereunto; of this kind is confession to man onely. And as children baptized without Confirmation, or an eye thereunto, have their full Christendome, so hath a Penitent upon his Confession to God a full absolution. Yet as the Church received Confirmation from the Apostolick hands, and so still continues the same as a duty of singular use and benefit; the like must be thought of confession to man also, the expediency whereof shall in fit place be discussed. I shall conclude with that answer of Pinuphius an Egyptian Abbot in John Cassian; *Who is it that cannot*

*Qui est qui non possit suppliciter dicere, peccatum meum cognitum tibi feci, & injustitiam meam non operui, ut per hanc confessionem etiam illud adungere mereatur, & tu remisisti impietatem cordis mei? Quod si verecundia retrahente revelare ea coram hominibus erubescis, illi quem latere non possunt, confiteri ea jugi supplicatione non desinas, ac dicere, Iniquitatem meam ego agnosco, & peccatum meum contra me est semper; tibi soli peccavi, & malum contra te feci. Qui & absque ullius verecundie publicatione curare, & sine improprio peccata donare consuevit.* Jo. Cassian, Collat. 20. cap. 8.

*humbly say, I made my sin known unto thee, and mine iniquities have I not hid; that by this confession he may confidently adjoyn, and thou forgavest me the iniquity of my heart? But if shamefulness do so draw thee back, that thou blushest to reveal them before men, cease not by continual supplication to confess them unto him from Whom they cannot be hid, and to say, I know my iniquity, and my sin is against me alwayes; to thee onely have I sinned, and done evil before thee; whose cu-*

*stome is both to cure without the publishing of any shame, and to forgive sins without upbraiding.* In this Abbots opinion Confession to man was left free and adiaphorou, provided alwayes, that confession to God be sincerely performed, to which I commend the case of all Penitents, and pass unto the next kind of confession made before man as following.

## CHAP. V.

## The Contents.

*Of Confession to Man. The Confession of sin under the Law before the Priest at the Altar, and the Sacrifice. Special enumeration of all sins not required of the Jews. The Law commandeth the acknowledgment of sin and restitution. Jobs friends confessed their errors unto him who sacrificed for them. Davids confession unto Nathan. Rabbins affirming sins to be confessed unto the Fathers and Levites. The place in Saint James chap. 5. of mutual Confession explained and vindicated. Testimonies of the Fathers for Confession unto man. The opinion of the Schoolmen, that sin in case of necessity, and in way of consultation for a remedy, not in way of absolution for reconciliation, may be detected to a Lay-man : and of the Reformed Divines. That sins may be confessed to a believing Brother for advice, and to the Minister of the Gospel.*

**I** Have formerly treated of *Exhomologesis* as a wholesome discipline imposed for notorious sins, by which the *Penitent* did not so much make known his offences, (for they were too apparent and scandalous) as acknowledge the injury and wrong he had done to God, and his people, and thereby the judgment, and punishment belonging in justice unto sin; and by such doleful postures to pacifie God, and satisfie the Church scandalized by his fall. We are now to treat of such a Confession, which bringeth to light the works of darkness, whereby a sinner becomes his own accuser, having no other witnesses then God, and his own Conscience of his folly; opening the same not onely unto God but to Man also : Our first

disquisition must be to inquire whether sins were and may be confessed unto a *Man*, without entring into the *manner* of the Confession; whether it ought to be of all particular sins, together with the circumstances changing, or aggravating the property of each several offence, or without considering so much the nature of the man, his profession, calling, or sanctity, (for these respects will follow in their order.) But whether a sinner may confess his sins in general or specified unto any man without respect of persons; provided onely that he be within the pale of the Church, and observe in his carriage the common rules of civility, and we shall find the practice hath been, (and that practice never controlled) in all times for man to have recourse to man also in confession.

The first and most ancient example in this kind is *Lamech*; for *Adam* and *Cain* were called to an account, and convinced before they would come to any acknowledgment: but this man questioned by none, called upon by none, accused by none, but by the bird in his breast, his *Conscience*, cries out, *Hear my voice, O ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech, for I have slain a man in my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. I must confess I held not this worthy of an instance, though it be the detection of a secret sin, because it was addressed unto women, unfit creatures to be acquainted with a mans Cabinet, and to look into the privy Chamber of his heart; and conceived of this passage to be as much for my purpose, as the fabulous conjectures of the Rabbins who the man was he slew, and the manner thereof, to the mind and meaning of Lamech; passed over it had been for me, had not Chrysostome grounded upon the same so many, and those notable observations of Confession.* 1. As the power and torture of an indicting Conscience, not suffering the sinner to be at quiet, till his sin be brought to light. 2. The good that comes to some by the examples of justice in others; *Cains* punishment in denying his sin, serving

Ὁυδενος καὶ παρακλῆτος  
 ἢ ἰδὲ δια-  
 λύχοντος,  
 αὐτὸς διὰ τῆς αἰκίας γλώττης καὶ τὴν ὁμολογίαν ἧς ἡμαρτημάτων ποιεῖται. *Chrysost.*  
*confesseth*



feffeth the fact, and allots the punishment; wherein no dislike could be taken to the proceedings, were it not for his mistake in the Judges.

The next act of Confession was more solemn, and religious, made to the Priest before the Altar;

for besides that general confession of the whole people, poured out annually upon the day of expiation, there was a private and particular confession of some special sins in use amongst them, for which by repentance they sued unto God for mercy, saith a Sorbonist. The

*Nec publica tantum confessio pro totius populi delictis fiebat in die expiationis — sed & privata & particularis specialium quorundam peccatorum ab iis agebatur, qui penitentiam agentes, sibi Deum propitium redere volebant.* Beauxan. hann. tom. 1. pag. 134. col. 2.

sinner that would be particular, repaired unto the Altar, and there presented the Priest with an offering, to make the atonement; for sins hid from the eyes of the assembly, and afterwards come to light, a young bullock, with imposition of hands from the elders was destin'd for a Sacrifice; the Ceremonies whereof are contained, *Levit. 4.* but for some sort of secret sins, which had not yet seen the light of fame, the sin-offering was appointed to be a lamb, or a kid, and the guilty

*Levit. 5. 6.*

person was to confess the sin, and the Priest to make the atonement. *Josephus* mentioneth the secret sin, and the sacrifice, which he saith was a Ram, but not the confession of the sin, as needless perhaps, because the offence was imprinted upon the Sacrifice as an Hieroglyphick thereof; of which see *Levit. 5.* for offering appertaining to particular sins be laid upon the Altar by the guilty person, without disclosing of his offence? did they not by that act pronounce themselves guilty of that sin, for which they brought the offering, and desired the atonement?

*Ὁ δὲ ἀμαρτῶν μὲν ἐαυτῷ ὁ συνειδώς, καὶ μὴ ἐκείνῳ ἔχων τὴν ἐλέγχοντα, κελὸν θύει, τὸ νόμιμον τὸ τοῦ κελύουσιν. Joseph. ἀρχαίων. λογ. 1. 3. c. 10.*

how could a particular

*Qui potuit quippiam offerre oblationem pro peccato, qui se peccasse pulchrum non satebatur? — eos qui pecculavit offerre pro peccato, pecculavit quod, ejus peccati de quo agebatur, sese reos agnoscere necesse fuit. Beza de Excm. contra Erasmus.*

That very act of the party peccant, viz. the presenting of the sacrifice was a real conviction. *Scotus* then fell short of the

In lege Mosaica de peccatis occultis tantum  
Dro fiebat confessio, de quibusdam tamen dese-  
ctibus publicis & de non observantia legalium  
fiebat confessio— generalis confessio Sacerdo-  
tis erat quedam dispositio ad misericordiam pe-  
tentiam pro populo, sicut erat ista, injuste egi-  
mus, peccavimus, &c. Scot. 1. 4. d. 17. q.  
unica.

truth in affirming that under Moses  
law, sins done in secret were confessed  
to God alone, and that the confession to  
man was but of some public defect,  
and not observing of legal rites. And  
that the general Confession of the Priest  
served to dispose God to be merciful

unto the people, like unto those supplications in the Church-Liturgy,  
We have sinned, we have done unjustly, &c. And Bella mine

Idud תתרו recte verit possit distincte,  
& expresse confitebantur, וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוֶינָה  
לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּכָל הַפְּקֻדֹת  
אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת  
לְפָנָיו, præceptum hoc intelligendum esse de confessione  
distincta, & in specie, ejus peccati, pro quo  
expiando sacrificandum erat. Bell. l. 3. de  
pæn. c. 3. Sect. ad hæc.

bath overshot the truth in stretching  
this confession to a distinct, and spe-  
cifique enumeration of each several  
sin; and though it be granted the  
Hebrew word to signifie an express  
and distinct confession, it concludeth  
not his purpose; for a distinct con-  
fession is one thing, and a confession  
of all distinct sins another. The truth

is, all the sins they thus Sacrificed for, were distinctly confes-  
sed, but not all the sins they committed were so sacrificed for,  
and to such kind of sins as were expiated by sacrifices doth the  
Cardinal himself limit this distinct confession. Aquinas allow-  
eth not so much to Confession under the Law as a clear and  
evident expression of sin, but rather a confused intimation  
thereof, reserving that distinct demonstration to the clearer

times of the Gospel; for thus he  
saith, In the law of Nature an inward  
recognition of sin unto God was enough,  
but under Moses law there was requi-  
red a protestation of the sin in some out-  
ward signs, as by the offering of a Sa-  
crifice for sin, whereby it might appear  
to man that he had sinned; but it was  
not requisite to make a special manife-

In lege nature sufficiebat recognitio peccati  
interior apud Deum, sed in lege Mosaica opor-  
tebat aliquo signo exteriori peccatum protestari;  
sicut per oblationem hostiæ pro peccato, ex quo  
& homini innotescere poterat eum peccasse;  
non autem oportebat ut speciale peccatum à se  
commisissum manifestaret, aut peccati circum-  
stantias, sicut in nova lege. Aq. Supplem.  
Qu. 6. art. 2.

station of the sin committed, or the circumstances thereof, as in the  
new law: As if to the Patriarchs before the Law, Confession  
were then but in speech, in the ears of God; to the Israelites  
under Moses law in farina, in the meal; and to Christians  
under

under the Gospel in *pane*, as the bread set upon the table; this be assured of, that in *Moses* time it was not so narrowly sifted into as in ours; for *Lyra* giving some reasons, why the Confession of the peoples sins unto God over the Sacrifice could not be particular, hath this amongst others; *because the Priest was not acquainted with all the sinnes of the people but in a general manner.*

Levit. 17. 21.  
Quia Sacerdos  
non omnia pec-  
cata populi sci-  
bat, sed in ge-  
nerali. *Lyra*, in  
Levit. 17.

The next instance is a law grounded upon the VIII Commandment, against usurpers of that which is not theirs, injoyning confession of the wrong, and restitution. *They shall confess their sin which they have done, and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath intruded.* The point of restitution is indeed of great latitude, and great necessity, a doctrine too sower for the palat of our times, and we can no more away with it then with Confession. Oh preposterous shame! we blush not to commit sin, but to confess; we blush not to do violence, but to restore; that speech of *Augustine* is grounded upon infallible truth, *The sin is not remitted, except what was detained be restored.* If thou hast not a mind to augment the principal four-fold as *Zacheus* did, yet add *ſc* thereto as the Law enjoined, or at least the *Principal*, as reason willeth. This case of Confession is unto man as damned together with God, and therefore he likewise this way is to be satisfied; the offender voluntarily detesting, and detecting the fact, rendring satisfaction, and desiring reconciliation. Here the *Rhemists* exceed the bounds of the *Tridentine* faith, in affirming, that a general Confession under the Law sufficed not for purging sin, and that sinners were bound by a divine positive law, to confess expressly, and distinctly their sin which they had committed, whom I send to *Cardinal Tolet*, a man of more judgment then all their College, to be corrected, who ingeniously confesseth, that not so much as a purpose to confess was necessary in the old law: for my part I verily believe, the same divine law for confession that is in force under the Gospel, to have been a law for Gods people at all times, and of like necessity to all penitents; and that the *Priests* after the order of *Aaron*, had power to make the atonement, as well as those after the order of *Melchisedec*.

Numb. 5. 7.

Materia resti-  
tutionis latif-  
sima quidem,  
sed valde ne-  
cessaria. *Biell.*  
l. 4. d. 15. Q. 2.

Non dimittitur  
peccatum, nisi  
restituatur ab-  
latum.

Lex ista loqui-  
tur in casu in  
quo aliquis pa-  
nitentiā du-  
ctus, vult facere  
satisfactionem  
proximo. *Lyra*,  
in loc.

Rhemists An-  
10. upon  
Numb. 5. Tom.  
1. pag. 333.

Propositum  
confitendi non  
fuit necessari-  
um in veteri  
lege. *Tolet.*  
tract. de con-  
fess.

*chisedec*

*chisedec* to grant the *absolution*; both in their several kinds being Ministers of Reconciliation, *Christ* the supreme head of either *hierarchy*, giving in proper person a period to the *Levitical* Priesthood, and investing his *Ministers* with their authority, which seems to be the greater, because it shines the clearer, and the more substantial, because the lesse ceremonious.

Job 42. 7, 8, 9,  
10.

The next, but precedent in time unto the former, is the submission of *Job's* friends (and that by special command of God) unto him, with a direction from God likewise, that *Job* by sacrificing for them should pacifie his incensed anger; for God held himself wronged through his servants side, and all this should they perform upon pain of his high displeasure: the words in the story are these, *And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, The Lord said unto Eliphaz the Temanite, my wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks, and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for your selves a burnt offering, and my servant Job shall pray for you, and him will I accept, lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite went and did according as the Lord commanded them; and the Lord also accepted Job, and the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends. Where note,*

1. As God was offended and his servant *Job*, so the offence must be acknowledged to both, that both may be pacified.
2. God retains his anger till the party wronged together with him be satisfied.
3. Gods wrath incensed against any for wronging his servants, will not be quenched but by his servants means and procurement; for his fury provoked by offending

*Job*, must be appeased by *Job* reconciling. They were to offer their sacrifices to *Job*, and *Job* to God for them; so the ancient Latine copies followed by Gregory read, *Go unto my servant Job, and he shall offer an*

*H. loc. sc.*

*Ita ad servum meum Job, & offeret holocaustum pro vobis; ita legit Greg. & vulg. lat. avoir par le moien de Job, — tell. mnt qu'il vous serve comme de Sacrificateur. Gen. nev. not. in Bibl. Gallic.*

*Holocaust for you*, and those words *him will I accept*, and, *the Lord accepted Job*, import no less. 4. God heareth a man sooner in his own cause, that is solicitous on the behalf of others; as *Job* turned away his own captivity in praying for his friends. Thou wilt say, but where did *Jobs* friends confess their sins unto him? Canst not thou spell their Confessions in their Sacrifices? for what meant those Sacrifices and *Jobs* intercessions on their behalf, but for their sins? and how could he offer, and pray for he knew not what? they then confessed the trespass, presented unto him the trespass offering, and desired his intercessions that God would be reconciled for their offences.

*Pro semitipso  
Punitens tan-  
to citius  
ex audiri me-  
ruit, quanto de-  
votè pro aliis  
intercessit.  
Greg. Mor. l.  
35. c. 20.*

The next President is *David* confessing his sin to *Nathan*, for albeit the Prophet gave him a *ontarycapiz*, and draught thereof in a *Parable*, and made *David* pass the sentence against himself in *thesi*, and brought it home to his Conscience by a special application, uncasting the *Parable*, and shewing that *He was the man*; yet *David*'s heart thus roused awoke, and he cried out, *I have sinned against the Lord*; and *Nathan* said unto *David*, *the Lord hath also put away thy sin, thou shalt not dye*. There was no tergiversation, no apology, no accusing of the instruments, but the King wholly took the sin upon himself. Thus did not *Saul* in the case of *Agag* and *Amalek*; the charge he had from God was the utter subversion of that *Prince*, and *State*; contrariwise the victory gained, he spareth the King, and maketh a prey of the richest and fattest spoils; and being reprehended by *Samuel*, spread a religious cloak over his transgression, as if that prey had been reserved for a sacrifice; and being further charged by *Samuel* for disobedience, he conveys the fact away from himself to the people, *I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone the way the Lord sent me, but the people, &c.* If any deviation it was in them, they were out of the way, and would needs spare the best of the cattle to pleasure God with a Sacrifice. Proud heart, that all this while would take no notice of his sin, till he heard his doom, deprivation from his Crown and dignity. Then *Saul* said unto *Samuel*, *I have sinned*; but *Samuel* said not unto

2 Sam. 12.

1 Sam. 15.

*Saul*

*Saul*, as *Nathan* unto *David*, *The Lord hath also put away thy sin.* *Saul's* was a confession upon the rack, but *David* had no sooner a sense of sin, but he opens it in humble confession;

Ἐυθὺς ἐπὶ τὸ φάρμακον ἐλήλυθεν, εἶδ' αὖ τὸ τραῦμα, πεσέφυγε τῷ ἱατρῷ, ἤμαρ-  
τον, φησὶ, καὶ εὐθὺς ἡ ἰασις, καὶ ὁ πόσις  
παρήνευσεν αὐτὸν τὸ ἀμάρτημα. *Basil. Græc.*  
*see Melancthon. pag. 243.*

*Ecclesiasticus*  
2. 26.

*The* wound no sooner perceived then he hastned for a Medicine, then he fled to the Physician, saying, I have sinned, and forthwith is healed. *The Lord* also hath put away thy sin. *Grave* is the wise mans advice, *Be not asha-*

*med* to confess thy sins, and force not the course of the river; That is, turn not the stream or course thereof backward by denial, or on the one side by excusing; but be thine own accuser to obtain a pardon.

Confession then of sin, and that unto man, amongst the people of the Jews, is extant upon Sacred records, practised before the law, commanded by the law, portraited in their Sacrifices, and performed by the Man after Gods own heart, and hath continued among that dispersed Nation even till our times, if *Thomas Walden* and *Antoninus* may be credited; the one learn'd so much from the relation of the Jews themselves at his being

Solent doctiores Judæi ante mortem confiteri omnia peccata Levitæ alicui, si quem fortè nati fuerint. Ant. part. 3. tit. 14. c. 6. Sect. 1. Habent Sacerdotes (Culbæi) ex posteritate Aharon Sacerdotis in pace quiescentis, qui cum nullis aliis connubia jungunt, nisi aut familie sue feminis aut viris, ut genus impermixtum conservent. *Benjam. Itiner. pag. 39, 40.*

in *Austria*, and the other affirmeth, that the learned sort are wont to confess all their sins to a Levite, a little before their death, if he may be had; and I think so too when they chance upon a Levite of the full blood, which to preserve without mixture, the Jews after the destruction of the Temple were not so careful as the

*Samaritans*, who boast their Priests to be not onely of the tribe of *Levi*, but family of *Aaron*, and therefore call them *Aharonita*. Some testimonies of the Rabbins which I find in *Petrus Galatinus* may not be neglected. In a Treatise called *Be'rashith* בְּרֵאשִׁית that is a lesser exposition upon the book of *Genesis*, and upon those words, *Jndah thy Brethren shall praise, or confesse thee*; being an elegant allusion of old *Jacob* to his name derived from confession; it is thus written, *This is that confession*

וְיִדְּבָרְךָ  
וְיִרְדְּךָ

*Gen. 49. 8.*



Confession which is spoken of by the holy Ghost in the hands of Job, Such as are wise confess or shew forth, & hide not from their fathers; that is, their sins. Of whom is this spoken? of the just, who subdue their lust and sensuality, and confess their doings to their Fathers, for he that confesseth his acts is worthy of the world to come, as it is said in Psal. 50. 23. He that offereth confession honoureth me, and he that ordereth his way, to him will I shew the salvation of God. Accordingly you find in Juda, that at what time his dealing was perceived by him with Thamar, he confessed it, Gen. 38. Acknowledge thy Creator, and be not ashamed of flesh and blood; that is, of man; presently he overcame his sensuality and affections, and confessed. And again in the same place. God holy and blessed curseth every one that doth not confess his deeds; for so we find in Cain, who denied, and said, Am I my Brothers keeper? therefore he was accursed, as it is there said; Now then cursed art thou. Such another testimony is extant in the Hierosolymitan Sanhedrim, in the chapter that beginneth נגמר הדיון that is, The judgment is defined; where it is thus written; All such as confess have their share in the world to come; for so we find in Achan, how Jehosuas said unto him, My son, give glory unto the Lord God of Israel, and make thy Confession, and shew unto me what thou hast done. And conceal it not from me; and Achan answered, and said unto Jehosuas, Of

L

Illæ est confessio de qua dictum est à Spiritu Sancto per manus Job, אשר חכמים גידו, ולא נחשו סמכותם. Cap. 15. hoc est, quia Sapientes sunt, confitentur, & indicant, & non abscondunt à Patribus suis, peccata scilicet sua. De quibus dictum est hoc? de justis, qui vincunt, & subjugant fomitem, seu sensualitatem suam, & confitentur actus suos Patribus suis; omnis enim qui confitetur actus suos, dignus est seculo futuro, sicut dictum est, Psal. 50. יובח תורה יכבדנו. Et ita invenies in Juda in hora qua pervenit ad eum factum Tamar, confessus est, quemadmodum dictum est, Gen. 38. זכר נא את בורך. ואלתקח בושם מבשר ודם. mox igitur vicit sensualitatem vel affectum suum, & confessus est.

Omnis qui non confitetur opera sua, Deus sanctus & benedictus maledicit; sic enim invenimus in Cain, qui negavit & dixit, Gen. c. 4. Nunquid Custos fratris mei Ego sum? maledictus ergo sis, sicut dictum est ibidem, Et nunc maledictus es tu.

Sanhedrim, in the chap-

Omnis confitens habet partem in seculo futuro; sic enim in Achan reperimus, quod dixit ei Iehosuah, Fili mi, Da obsecro, honorem Domino Deo Israel, & da confessionem, & indica mihi quæso quid tegeris; ne celes à me: & ait, Verè ego peccavi Domino Deo Israel, & ita hoc sicut hoc feci. Et undè habetur quod remissum fuit ei peccatum? ex eo quod dictum est ibidem Jehosue scilicet. cap. 7. & ait Jehosuas, Sicut turbasti nos, turbat te Dominus in die isto: in die isto (inquit) tu turbatus eris, sed non eris turbatus in futuro.

a truth I have sinned before the Lord God of Israel, and have done thus and thus. *But from whence doth it appear that his sin was forgiven? from that it is said in the same place, viz Josb. 7.* And *Jehosua* said, As thou hast troubled us, the Lord trouble thee in that day: *In that day (saith he) thou art troubled, but thou shalt not be troubled in the dayes to come.* And that this confession was made distinctly, is evident by what is recorded in the book intituled יוֹם הכִּפּוּרִים, that is, of *Dayes*, and in the Chap.

Dixit Rabbi חנוּנָא *Hanna*, Omnis qui transgressione transgressus est, necesse est ut singulatum exprimat peccatum. Pet. Galatin. de arcan. Cath. verit. l. 10. c. 3.

יוֹם הכִּפּוּרִים sc. the day of propitiation; Rabbi *Hunna* said, Every one that in offending hath offended, necessarily he must express the offence in a special manner. By these *Ma-*

*sters* of the *Synagogue*, it may easily be guessed how confession was ordered, and practised by their Disciples and Profelytes.

James 5. 17.

In the *New Testament* the onely pertinent place to prove Confession unto man not circumstantiated with any office, quality, &c. is in the Epistle of Saint *James*, *Confesse your faults one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed*: where the disease is *sin*, the remedy confession and prayer; the Physicians and Patients subalternal, *one another*, the end curation, *that ye may be healed*; wherein mutual prayer is injoynd. and mutual confession; and as the precept is *one to pray for another*, so is it also *one to confesse to another*; and as not onely the order of Priests may pray for others, but other orders of the faithful for them, and others also; so sin may be detected to men of another rank than Priests onely: to Priests I grant *principally*, but not *solely*: and little advantageth *Romes* clancular

confession, where the Laity and Clergie hold no correspondency, they confessing to Priests onely, and not Priests to People; whereas the *Apostle* by saying, *Confess one to another, prescribeth confession no more to be made to the Priest than to another man.* (saith *Socrus*.) So that without forcing or racking of the words, the sense will fall out to be this; *Confess your sins*

Il ne fait rien pour ceste confession à l'oreille d'un Prestre, car icy l'Apostre recommande une confession mutuelle, qui ne se fait in cette pratique. D. Buchan. l'histoire de la Conscience. p. 173.

Dicendo Confitemini alterutrum non magis dicit confessionem faciendam esse Sacerdoti, quam alii; subdit enim, Orate pro se invicem. Scot. l. 4. d. 17. Q. unic.

sins one to another, that being conscious of one anothers diseases, you may the better frame your request on one anothers behalf for your recovery. Confession of faults serving here for an instruction unto prayer, which one (a) Member of the Church maketh for another. Then if none can receive Confession of sins but a Priest, none but a Priest can pray for another. But if a Lay-Christian may pray for another, yea, for a Priest also; then may confession be made to a Lay-Christian, yea from a Priest also. Again, if Priests be the onely men to whom confession in this place is addressed, then Priests onely pray one for another; for if none can confess one another but Priest and Priest, they are the Men then that can only pray one for another: furthermore, the Confession Saint James speaketh of, passeth to and fro, from one to another; now if none may hear confession but a Priest, none may make confession but a Priest, for with the Apostle, those onely must make confession that may receive confession, and they onely confess that may be confessed unto. This discourse is grounded upon the mutual and reciprocal injunction of Confession, and intercession, on the behalf of others, as duties of equal latitude and extent; The Reason standeth thus;

Bar. *All such as may make supplications for others, may receive the confessions of others.*

Bar. But all Christians may make their supplications for others.

Ra. Therefore all Christians may receive the confessions of others.

There are that limit the Apostle to speak onely of that Confession which tendeth to Brotherly reconciliation, whereby the offender humbly submits, ingeniously acknowledgeth, and thereby deprecate the offence, and pacifieth the party offend-

(a) Alterutrum, i. aequalibus. Gloss. interlin,

*Mutuum confessionem & mutuum orationem simul iungit; si solis sacrificiis confitendum, ergo & pro illis solis orandum. Calvin. Instit. lib. 3. c. 4. Sect. 6.*

*Reciproca relatione isti pro se invicem tenentur orare. Hug. Card. in loc. ergo, ad se invicem reciprocè tenentur confiteri.*

*Hic exigitur reciproca Confessio--atqui hoc soli sacrifici sibi vendicant, ergo ad eos soli atleganda est confessio. Calvin. in Jac. cap. 5.*

*Sentit de quotidianis offensis Christianorum inter ipsos, quos continuè vult reconciliari;*

*alioqui, si de confessione sensisset, quam dicimus partem Sacramenti penitentiae, non addidisset ἑαλλήλους, i. vobis invicem, sed sacerdotibus. Erasmi, annot. in Jac. 5. pag. 744.*

ed; as if he should have said, *the faults you commit one to another confess one to another, and be reconciled*; for had he meant *Sacramental confession*, he would rather have said, *confess to the Priests than one to another*. This note of *Erasmus* had been worth the noting, if the words following, *and pray one for another*, did not follow, which argue the fellow-servant not to be the party grieved, but the Lord, to whom he is to intercede on his fellows behalf, *q.d.* Confess one to another the sins committed against God, and pray one for another to God for them. Others understand by

*Hec omnia intelliguntur de Confessione, secundum quod ipsa est preceptum, & sicut precepta quoad confessionem mortalium, consilium vero quoad confessionem venialium. Hug. Card. Expos. in Jac. cap. 5.*

*sins*, the sins against God, by the *Confessors*, not Priests alone, but others also in some cases, and the *confession* as a duty to be performed by way of 1. *Precept*, and of 2. *Counsel*. If mortal sins be the subject, then the

Confessor is to be a Priest, and the confession necessary, and under command; but if the sins be *venial*, the Confessor may be a Lay-man, and the Confession free, and under counsel onely. This later confession then being an *Evangelical counsel*, belongeth onely to such perfect men as *Monks* and *Friers*, and then a Lay brother may serve at a turne to receive the Confessions of a Cloyster, which rather than those religious *Cloysters* will admit, this *cardinal exposition* shall be turned off the hinges. But it will be said, a Priest may take notice of such *Atomes*, and *Peccadillo's* too, if his leisure serve him, or if not, may make them over to one of the Laity, as not worthy of his ears. I see now a myserie and method observed in *reserved cases*; *moats* and lesser sins are reserved for a Lay-audience, sins of a middle magnitude for Priests ears, but *beams*, foul and heynous offences, for the *Penitentiaries* themselves at *Rome*. And truly I think Saint *James* was as well acquainted with *venial sins* as with *Evangelical counsels*, and with *reserved cases* as much as with *reserved confessions*. So as touching this interpretation, all that I have to say is, to put my Reader in mind, shat this Scripture is from an *Apostle*, and this *glosse* from a *Cardinal*: But he and I both must take notice of what *Bride* saith, because he was our worshipful Countrey-man, who willetb,

willeth, that daily and trivial faults, like should confesse to like, one to another, of the same rank; and believe to be holpen by their duty prayers, whereas the uncleanness of a fouler leprosie, we should according to the law, unfold unto the Priest; and as he shall determine, to endeavour our purification after such manner and time as he shall appoint.

In hac sententia debet esse illa discretio, ut quotidianarum levissimarum peccatorum invicem co-

teamur, eorumque quotidianâ credamus oratione salvari. Porro, gravioris leproe immunditiâ in juxta legem Sacramenti pandamus, atque ad ejus arbitrium, qualiter, & quanto tempore jusservit, purificari curemus. Bed. Com. in Jac. 5.

But the Cardinal fixeth upon these words ἀλλήλους, & ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλήλων, one for another, and one to another; and contendeth,

that they are to be understood as the consequence of the words of the Scripture (or rather of his impertinent glosses) shall require; insomuch that confesse one to another is nothing else, but you men that need absolution, to such men that have the power of absolving. A

Voces illæ ALTERUTRUM, & INVICEM accipienda sunt, prout exigit consequentia verborum Scripture divine. Confitemini homines hominibus, qui absolutione indigent, illis qui potestatem habent absolvendi. Bellar. lib. 3. de Pœn. c. 4. Sect. Sed hæc.

very discreet Comment, and which will settle the practice of his Church throughout, in the point of Penance, thus: Confess you that have committed lesser sins, and have less money to pay fees, to your Sir Johns at home; but you whose sins are riper, and purses fuller to commute, unto the Bishop, and purchase absolution from his Consistory. But you whose sins are of a deeper grain, and your selves of vaster possessions, gangye on pilgrimage to Rome, as a dainty reserved for his Holiness; and remember to carry something with you besides your Pilgrims-staff and habit, for fear you prove unworthy of Papal absolution. All these glosses are warranted by that liberty of interpretation the Cardinal hath here taken to himself; which to maintain he would faine paraphrase with a place in Peter, viz. Use hospitality one to another without grudging, that is, not all to use hospitality promiscuously, but those that are able to those that are want; so instruct

φιλόξενοι  
ἑῖς ἀλλήλους  
ἀνευ γοργυσ-  
μῶν. I Pet.  
4. 9.

Eos qui tecto  
indigent, hospi-  
tio recipiendos

esse ab his qui domum habent, imperitos à Doctis instruendos, agros à Medicis curandos. — sic qui peccatorum vinculis conficti tenentur, ad eos accedere debent quibus dictum est. Quæcunque solve itis, &c. id. ib.

one another, that is, the Doctor the unlearned; so heal one another, that is, the Physician the sick; so confesse you that are held with the bonds of sin, to such to whom it was said, Whose sins soever you shall loose, &c. Thus the Jesuit, but sophistically, for the former instances are *distributiones accommodatae*, wherein every one is to do good according to his power, & the gift that he hath received, viz. those to be given to hospitality, that are enabled with means; those to instruct, that are Θεοδιδασκοι, taught of God; and those to heal, that have the skill. Now where God gives the gift, he requires the duty annexed; and of such as receive the grace, the good-work: for example, the hope of the Resurrection is common to every believer, and upon a dead friend, a sure comfort for a sad loss; wherefore comfort ye one another with these words, a duty belonging to all Christians, because all of them had the like means, and assurance of Consolation; so, This is my commandment, that ye love one another; all Christians then are tied to reciprocal love, because the precept bindeth all; and so in this present place, To pray one for another is an universal duty of all Christians; and that one Christian may the better pray for another, the Apostles advice is to confess the sins which lie heavy upon the Conscience to another Christian, to enable, and instruct him the better to procure of God by prayer that which thou seekest, ease, and refreshment; as every Christian therefore hath (or should have) the gift to pray for another, so hath he the capacity to receive the confession of another. This I say truly understood *pro distributione accommodata* will bring to light the Jesuites sophistry, and shew how vain his instance was to uphold his fancy. Bishop Fisher, a Cardinal as well as he (although his head went off before his hat went on) but of greater conscience in handling of Scrip-  
 tures, contradiceth not the former sense of confession to a Lay-brother, and is contented to approve thereof; so it may be granted him from thence, (and he hath a hard heart that will not) that confession may be made to another besides God

only. And this all the Conclusion according to *Lyra*, that  
 from

ὡς τε παρκα-  
 λᾷτε ἀλλή-  
 λους ἐν τοῖς λό-  
 γοις τῆτοις.  
 1 Thes. 4.  
 ult.  
 ἵνα ἀγαπήτε  
 ἀλλήλους.  
 1 Joan. 13. 34.

Quod si quispiam contendat sensisse Jacobum, quod frater fratri cuiusvis debeat confiteri, nihil moror; si tamen hoc mihi donaverit, quod alteri cuiquam omnino quam Deo sit confitendum. Roffens. contr. Luther. art. 8. pag. 139.



from hence may be deducted, how, it is manifest that confession ought to be made not to God only, but to man also; and to that end I produced it.

In the next place such testimonies of the Fathers shall be alleged, which speak confession to be made unto others, over and above that which the Penitent maketh unto God. Origen expounding those words, *A sword shall passe through thy heart, that the thoughts of many may be revealed*; writeth thus; *There were in men evil thoughts, which to this end are revealed, that being publish'd they may be lost, and be as if they had not been; and being dead cease to have been; and that He might kill them, who for us was killed; for so long as our thoughts are hid, and not brought forth, it was impossible they should utterly be cut off; therefore we also that have sinned, ought to say, My sin have I made known unto thee, and my iniquity have I not hid. I said I will confess my sins against my self unto the Lord. Now if we would do so, and reveal our sins not onely unto God, but unto those also that are able to heal our wounds, and our offences, our sins shall be blotted out by him who saith, Behold I blot out as a cloud thy sins, and thy iniquity as darkness. Where is express mention of Confession unto others besides God, which may heal us as his instruments, and servants; and it must not be denied, that his Priests are professed Physicians of this Cure; yet as we see bodily diseases oftentimes healed by such as make no profession thereof, so it may fare with the soul-Physician also, the medicine especially coming from heaven. Nor can a Lay-Physician be void of power to heal, although he hath none to absolve; for God answers many times conferreth safety immediately from himself, and so much those words, *Our sins shall be blotted out by him who saith, &c.* seem to intimate.*

Cyprian

Ex quo patet, quod confessio debet fieri non solum Deo sed homini. Lyra. in Jac. 5.

Cogitationes erant male in hominibus, quæ propterea revelatæ sunt, ut prolata in medium perderentur, & interfectæ, atque emortuæ, esse desinerent, & occideret eas ille, qui pro nobis mortuus est; quamdiu enim absconditæ erant cogitationes, nec prolata in medium, impossibile erat eas penitus interfici. Unde & nos, si peccaverimus, debemus dicere, Peccatum meum notum fecit tibi, & iniquitatem meam non abscondi. Dixi, annuntiabo iniquitatem contra me Domino; si enim hæc fecerimus, & revelaverimus peccata nostra non solum Deo, sed & his qui possunt morderi vulnibus nostris atque peccatis, delebo ut nubem iniquitates tuas, & sicut caliginem peccata tua. Origen. tom. 6. hom. 17. in Luc. pag. 145.

*Cum in minoribus peccatis agant peccatores penitentiam iusto tempore, & secundum disciplinam ordinem, ad exomologesin veniant, & permanentis impositionem Episcopi, aut Cleri, ius communicationis accipiant.* Cypr. 1.3. Epist. 14.

*Nam cum in minoribus delictis que non in Deum committuntur, penitentia agatur iusto tempore, & exomologesis fiat, inspecta eius vita qui agit penitentiam; nec ad communicationem quis venire possit, nisi prius illi ab Episcopo, & Clero manus sit imposita. id.*

performed; his life being look'd into which is to undergo the penance; neither may he be admitted to communicate without imposition of hands from the Bishop, and the Clergie. From these passages B. Rhenanus collecteth, that secret confession (besides the discipline thereof in publick) for secret sins, together with a prescript injunction from the Priest, of fasting, or giving almes in the penitent, (as the nature of his sin required) to have been on foot in Cyprians time.

*Salutarem mortelam parvis licet, & modicis vulneribus requirunt.* Cypr.

In the zealous age of that blessed Martyr, wherein it was hard to say, whether desire of doing well, or shame for doing evil was greater, many sinners and lapsed Christians put to publick penance, received such peace of Conscience upon the performance thereof, and their reconciliation from the Bishop, that others also voluntarily came in, and for offences of lesser nature submitted themselves to the same discipline. In process of time the resort became so frequent, and the offence so small, it was thought fit left by often penance, the discipline of open penance might melt, and grow into contempt, to appoint a fit person, (a Clergy-man I believe) who was to be ἐχίμυθος, one that could keep counsel and πολυτέργος, of much experience, to distinguish betwixt leprosy and leproy, and so give counsel also, to receive confessions, & inspecta eius vita qui agit penitentiam, and sift into his life that would do penance; and meeting with such sins as he thought merited publick penance,

nance, to present the sinner to the Bishop and Clergy, to be admitted to Exomologesis; so private Confession was used in Saint Cyprians dayes, as a preparative, and manuduction to the publick; and occasioned upon the tender consciences of those, whose faith was stronger, and fear better, whose hearts stood in much awe of God, and whose Consciences awaked upon the least shock of sin; much different both in the manner, and end, from that rack of Conscience, rather than relief, popish shrift, as in due place shall appear.

*Audis non fuisse vel preceptum necessarium, vel consuetudinem universalem; dicit enim (Cyprian.)*

*fuisse exempla quorundam, qui fide majore, & timore meliore erant; non igitur omnes hoc fecerunt, nec dammati fuerunt illi, qui soli Deo talia confessi sunt. Chemnit. exam. part. 2. pag. 191.*

Saint Basil in answer to that demand, whether it were behoofeful (laying shame aside) to confess our evil actions to all men, or to some, and what conditions those some should be of; answereth thus; *The Confession of sins keeps the same course as the laying open of bodily diseases. Now men do not lay open corporal diseases to every one they meet with, but to persons skilful in the art of healing; so confession of sins ought to be made unto such as are able to cure them; according as it is written, You that are strong bear the infirmities of the weak; that is, take them away by your careful endeavour. Where care and diligence is equally required in choosing the Physician, and in curing of the Patient. I dare not peremptorily say the Physician is ever to be a Priest, and confine this election to that order; yet it is a duty more expressly required at the hands of that Hierarchy, whose profession is the art of binding up of wounded Consciences, and their School a sanctuary for a troubled soul: but of this I am sure, Saint Basils pleasure was, that the wounds and diseases of the soul should be shewed forth to sub-celestial Physicians: and as B.*

*Ἡ ἐξαγόρευσις τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων τὸν ἔχει τὸ λόγον, ὃν ἔχει ἡ ἐπίδειξις τῶν σωματικῶν παθῶν· ὥς ἐν τῇ πᾶσι τοῖς σφμαλῶν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀποκαλύπτουσιν οἱ ἀνθρώποι, ἔτε τοῖς τυχεῖσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐμπείροις τῆς τέτων θεραπείας· ἔτω καὶ ἡ ἐξαγόρευσις τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων γινώσκῃ ὁρᾷται ἐπὶ τῶν δυναμένων θεραπύειν, καὶ τὸ γεγενημένον, ὑμεῖς οἱ δυνατοὶ τὰ ἀδυνάματα τῶν ἀδυνάτων βασάζετε, τυλέτε, αἰρέτε διὰ τῆς ἐπιμελείας, Βασίλ. ἀσκήτικα. Εἰρῆσο. σθ. pag. 528.*

*Medicina una  
nobilis confes-  
sio fuit, ac*

*proximis eam palmifacere, ut per communem eorum orationem vitia facilius curentur.* Basil.  
apud B. Rhem. prefat. ad Terr. de Pœn.

*Rhenanus further alleageth him; Confession is a noble kind of Medicine, opening to our nearest, and dearest acquaintance, that our sins by their common prayers may be more easily healed.*

*Saint Hierom upon Ecclesiastes writeth thus; If that serpent*

*Si quem Serpens Diabolus occultè momor-  
derit, & nullo conscin peccati veneno insecer-  
rit, si tacuerit qui percussus est, & non egerit  
penitentiam, nec vulnus suum fratri, & Ma-  
gistro voluit confiteri, Magister qui habet  
linguam ad curandum, facile ei prodesse non  
poterit; si enim erubescat egrotus vulnus Me-  
dico confiteri, quod ignorat medicina non cu-  
rat.* Hieron. in cap. 10. Eccles. tom. 7.  
pag. 43.

*the Devil shall have bit any one secretly,  
and shall have infected him with  
the poyson of sin. no man besides him-  
self acquainted therewith: If he that is  
so stricken shall keep silence, and shew  
no repentance, nor have a will to confess  
his sin to his Brother, and Master,  
the Master that hath a tongue to cure  
him cannot easily avail him any thing,  
for if the sick man be ashamed to lay*

*open his wound to the Physician, the Physick cannot cure what  
it knoweth not. Hitherto Hierom. This Physician of all likely-  
hood should be a Priest, because he is called Magister; for by  
that title, and of Father, ancient times revered their Pa-  
stors; however the adjunct Frater, sheweth the Physician  
was not God but man, to whom the wounded Spirit must  
be opened.*

*Saint Augustine upon the Psalm 66. saith thus: Be sad before*

*Tristis esto antequam confitearis, confessus  
exulta, jam sanaberis. Non confitentis con-  
scientia saniem collegerat, apostema tumuerat,  
cruciabat te, requiescere non sinebat; adhibet  
Medicus fomenta verborum, & aliquando se-  
cat, adhibet medicinale ferrum in correptione  
tribulationis; tu agnosce Medici manum, con-  
fitere, exeat in confessione, & defluat omnis  
sanies; jam exulta, jam latave, quod reli-  
quum est facile sanabitur.* Aug. sup. Psal. 66.

*thou dost confess, after confession re-  
joyce, for withall thou shalt be healed.  
Such a mans Conscience that doth not  
confess gathereth corruption, the apostem  
is swollen, it torments thee, it suffereth  
thee not to be at quiet; the Physician  
applieth fomentations of words, and  
sometimes lanceeth it with the knife of  
tribulation; do thou acknowledge the  
Physicians hand, confesse, let out the*

*corruption in confession that it may flow from thee; rejoyce now  
and be glad, what remaineth will easily be cured. Whether the  
Lord or the servant be the Physician I resolve not, let the place  
be consulted withall.*

*Saint*

Saint Chrysostome writing upon the conference betwixt Christ and the woman of Samaria, related John 4. hath these words :

*Let us imitate this woman. & in confessing of our sins let us not be ashamed of man; let us rather (as becomes us) fear God, who seeth whatsoever is done for the present. & for the time to come; will punish whatsoever is not for the present repented of. Our actions are to the contrary; we fear not him that shall come to judge, but such as can hurt us little or nothing, we quake and tremble at, as ashamed of them, but in the very thing we so much feared, therewithall shall we be punished; for the man that is moved onely to be ashamed before men, and is no whit ashamed to do evil in the sight of the all-seeing God, neither will repent here, nor be converted; in that day shall be openly disgraced, and made known not onely before two or three, but before the whole world. It is evident, that this, Patriarch treateth of*

*that confession made before them, of whom carnal men are ashamed, that is, of men not of God; for such the Father blameth that blush not to do evil before God, but to confess it before man; and affirmeth how they shall be punished even in that they so much dreaded, discredit, and disrepute with men; for the day will come when they, and their actions shall be spread abroad before the face of the whole world, & thereupon he groundeth this exhortation : Now*

*I beseech you, that although no man seeth what we do, every man to enter into his own conscience, and to make reason the judge thereof, and to open the*

*εκπομπευθῆναι ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ φοβερᾷ, ἰασάσθω ἥδη τὰ τραύματα, ἐπιλιθῆτω τὰ φάρμακα τῆς Μελανίας, ib. lin. 18.*

*Μιμνήσμεθα τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ ἡμεῖς, καὶ ὅτι τοῖς οἰκείοις ἀμαρτήμασι μὴ αἰσχυνόμεθα ἄνθρωποι, ἀλλὰ φοβώμεθα ὡς χρὴ Θεόν, τὸν ὃ νῦν ὁρῶντα τὸ γινόμενον, καὶ τότε κολάζοντα τὸς μὴ μελαιοῦσάντας νῦν ὡς νῦν γε τεναλῖον ποιῶμεν, καὶ μὲν γὰρ μέλλοντα κείνῳ ἐδεδόικαμεν, τὸς ὃ ἔδεν ἡμᾶς παραβλάπτουσας, τέτυκται τοις, καὶ ἢ παρ' αὐτῶν αἰσχύνῃν τρέμομεν· διὰ τὸ ἐν ᾧ δεδούκαμεν, ἐν τῷ δὲ δίδομεν καὶ τιμωείαν. Ὁ γὰρ αἰσχύνῃν ἀνθρώπων ὑποφωμένῳ, νῦν μόνον, Θεὸς ὃ μὴ αἰσχυρόμεν· περὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ ὁρῶντος, μὴδὲ θέλων μελαιοῦσαι καὶ μελαιοῦσας, ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκ ἐνώπιον ἐνὸς καὶ δευτέρου, ἀλλὰ τῆς οἰκόμενης ἀπάσης ὁρώσης παρεστηγυμνίζεσθαι. (Chrys. in Joan. hom. λε. pag. 694. Tom. 2.*

*Παρακαλῶ τοῖνυν καὶ μνηεῖς ἰδὴ τα ἡμέτερον, ἕκασον ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ ἑαυτῷ συνειδὲς εἰσελθεῖν, καὶ καθίσαι ἑαυτῷ δικαστὴν καὶ λογισμὸν, καὶ εἰς μέσον ἀγειν τὰ πεπλημμελημένα, καὶ εἰ μὴ βύλοιτο τότε*

sins he hath committed, and if he would not they should come to publication at that dreadful day, let him procure his wounds forthwith to be heal'd, and the medicine of repentance to be applied. It is apparent that confession before man (which with sensual men implieth shame and dishonour, as drawing their works out of darkness into light) is there meant, and not secret confession unto God, whereof they little pass; it being their disposition to be more in awe of being ashamed before Israel and this Sun, than before the God of Israel.

Ergo vos fratres etiam pro periculo meo per illum Dominum, quem occulta non fallunt, desinite vulneratam tegere conscientiam: Prudentes egri medicum non verentur, ne in oculis quidem partibus, etiam secuturos, etiam perusturos. Pacian. in peren. ad Pœn.

Nunc ad eos sermo sit, qui bonè, ac sapienter vulnera sua penitentiæ nomine confitentes, nec quid sit penitentia, nec quæ vulnerum medicina noverunt; similesq; sunt illis, qui plagas quidem aperiunt, ac tumores, medicisq; etiam assidentibus confitentur; sed admoniti, quæ imponenda sunt negligunt, & quæ bibentia fastidiunt. ib.

tance meaneth, or any medicine for their wounds; and are like to such which open their grief, and swelling, and confess them before Physicians met together, but bring admonished what things to apply, and what to drink, neglect the use of such prescribed receipts.

Saint Bernard, a Father also, though born out of due time, saith thus, *What shall I speak of Bethphage, a village of Priests, where the Sacrament of Confession, and the mystery of Priestly Ministry is contained,* —as it is written, The word is near thee, in thy mouth, and in thy

Quid de Bethphage dicam viculo Sacerdotum, ubi & confessionis Sacramentum, & Sacerdotalis Ministerii mysterium continetur?

Scriptum est, Prope est verbum in ore tuo, & in corde tuo, non in altero tantum, sed simul in utroque verbum habere meminervis; & quidem verbum in corde peccatoris operatur salutiferam contritionem, verbum verò in ore tuo noxiam tollit confusionem, ne impediatur necessarium confessionem. Bern. Serm. ad Milites Templi. cap. 12.

heart,



heart, *Deut.* 32. and remember thou to have the word not in one of those places, but in both; for the word in the heart of a sinner worketh saving contrition, and the word in the mouth takes away all prejudicial confusion, that it may be no hindrance to necessary confession. At which Testimony startle not, that Confession is called a Sacrament; that is, not in a proper signification, but as he calls the Ministry a Myserie, and considering the age this good man lived, marvel not to find in him a little touch of the times; great is his praise to have been so little defiled.

Concerning the *School-Divines*, they are absolute for confession to be made unto man, that make it a matter necessary to salvation to confess our sins either *actually* or *promissorily* unto a Priest; All that may be doubted is, whether they grant that sins are of a Lay-cognizance or no, that is, whether they may be confessed to any man except a Priest. Their Master shall be the Mouth to speak for all, who proposeth this Question; *Whether it may be sufficient to confesse unto a Lay-man?* and answereth, *that all diligent enquiry must be made for a Priest;—but in case a Priest cannot be had, let confession be made to a neighbour, or companion; and tels us, that it will not be labour lost, for albeit such a Confessor be not indowed with power to absolve, yet the penitent becomes worthy of pardon for the desire he had to confesse unto a Priest.*

*Bonaventure* allows of confession to a Lay man, but with this distinction: *If* (saith he) *Confession be considered as a virtuous act, opposite to hypocrisie, wherein the party accuseth himself, that he may appear no otherwise than he is indeed; or else laying open his sins to find the means to heal them; in this sense confession may be made to any Lay-man, who may give help by his instructions, and prayers; and of which may arise shame, and humiliation, and he that takes the*

*An sufficiat confiteri Laico?—Sacerdotis examen requirendum est studiose, — si tamen defuerit Sacerdos, proximo vel socio est facienda confessio; si ille cui confitebitur, potestatem non habeat solvendi, sit tamen dignus veniæ Sacerdotis desiderio. Lomb.lib.4.d.17.*

*De Confessione possimus loqui dupliciter; uno modo prout est opus virtutis directè repugnans hypocrisi, in quo quis seipsum accusat, ne alius sit quam appareat, vel mala sua aperit ad investigandam curationem; & hoc modo confessio potest fieri cuilibet etiam Laico, qui potest adjuvare etiam instruendo, vel orando, & de quo homo potest erubescere, & humiliari, & ille exemplo humilitatis meliorari, non peccatorum cognitione depravari: alio modo prout confessio est opus Sacramentale, & prout ordinatur ad reconciliationem, &c. Bon.l.4.d.17.*

*confession*

*confession may himself thereby be amended, but as it is a Sacramental act, and relateth to reconciliation, so to the Priest onely, &c.*

I.

Wherein we see that confession to a Lay-brother is approved; and the good that comes thereby expressed: As first, the avoiding of hypocrisie, whereby a man blazoneth himself, and his infirmities, that he may not be better esteemed than he may deserve; by holding out unto the world good parts, and by keeping in the bad: Pride lieth at the door, and worldly estimation knocks to open it, and let in that Devils-darling; but it must be thought to proceed from humility, when any shall be like-minded with the Apostle, to glory in his infirmities. The second Reason is for advice and Spiritual counsel, which oft-times

2.

Πόλλαις τοι  
ἡ μωρὸς ἀνὴρ  
κατακαίειον  
εἶπεν.

3.

may be as sound from the lips of a Lay-brother as one of the Clergy. *Naaman* received the first direction for the curing of his Leprosie from a Captive maid; even a little chance may cast in light, and from men that make no profession thereof may issue words of wisdom. And the third is to be the better relieved by other mens prayers, and intercessions; for when others are acquainted with our need, they can the better frame their petitions for our relief: and the last reason may be a good example of humility; that thy Brother into whose bosome thou hast poured out thy weakness, seeing that low estimation thou bearest of thy self, far from the opinion and practice of most men (who pass their dayes with full sailes, and little ballast in their ship) prising more the shew, than the reality of virtue; they (I say) may be moved also by thy example to the like humble carriage, and demeanour; such flowers as these are gathered oft-times in a Lay-confession.

4.

Cujus uxorem  
Sacerdos per  
adulterium ma-  
culavit.

And of what power and virtue Confession to a Lay-man is, give ear unto the ensuing story. A Priest there was somewhat too familiar with a Gentlemans wife of his parish, (and as report then went, such kind of dealings were familiar with them) whereof the husband had some jealousy; it fortuneed that at the next village there was a *Demoniack* that used to upbraid such as came unto him, by ripping up all such sins as lay behind unconfessed; marry, over confessed sins he had no power of discovery. The Gentleman to make a triall, intreated the Priest to accompany him thither. The Priest could not refuse him, but

but smelling his intent, pretended some natural necessity of bending in the stable, where chancing upon a servant of the Gentlemen, he cast himself down at his feet, and desires him to hear his confession; which made, he desired his penance forthwith. The servant (this being none of his trade) bad him take such penance as himself was wont to prescribe unto his fellow Priest in the like case, and so dismissed him to his Master; along they went to him that was troubled with the unclean Spirit, where the Gentleman began to enquire, Know you any thing by me, or by this *Sir Domine* here? poynting to the Priest, who answered in the vulgar tongue, I know nothing by him; but in Latin gave the Priest an *Item*, which none there but himself understood, *in stabulo justificatus est*, he was assayed in the stable; as not permitted to reveal unto the Gentleman the sin committed, nor yet suffered to conceal from the Priest the virtue of confession. Here is confession to a Layman, and that from a Priest, as much as was looked for, and absolution from a Lay-hand likewise, more than could be expected; and how availeable confession to a Lay-man in a Jakes from a Priest is in such Priestly cases: But leaving such *Spectra*, & *μορμολύβεια* to be believed by such as are given over to believe illusions, Let us remove unto the other side, and see the opinion of men (as we imagine) of a more refined judgement.

Calvin saith thus; *There followeth that secret confession which is made unto God, a voluntary confession also unto men, so often as it shall be held expedient for Gods glory and our humiliation.* And in another place the same man telling us of two forms of Confession seen in the Scripture, of which one is for reconciliation to an offended Brother; another to a Brother also for reconciliation, but with God; of this writeth thus; *St James in those words would have us to understand, that detecting our infirmities one to another, we should aid our selves with mutual counsel, and consolation; where Counsel and Consolation is the scope of this confession, and that end, one who is not of the Clergy may afford.*

*Rogo ut propter Dominum confessionem audias.*

*Quantum alteri Sacerdoti pro tali crimine iungereis, hoc sit satisfactio vestra.*

*Nec tamen tacere licuit, ut virtutem confessionis Sacerdoti ostenderet. Spec. exempl. dist. 4. sect. 4.*

*Arcanam illam confessionem que Deo fit sequitur voluntaria apud homines confessio, quoties id vel divine glorie, vel humiliationis nostre interest. Calv. Inst. lib 3. c. 4. Sec. 10.*

*Sentit Jacobus, ut nostris infirmitates alteri detegentes, consilio, & consolati one mutua nos juvemus, ib. sect. 12.*

Calvin

*Calvin* is thought of some to be too precise, and rigid in his *Tenets*; let a moderate man speak, *Cassander* who delivers it as a conclusion agreed upon by the Protestants of *Germany*;

*Multi propter ambiguos casus opus habent consilio, ideo hortandi sunt homines, ut addant enumerationem, ut iuvare consilio, atque excitari magis ad penitentiam, & de multis rebus admoneri possint. Cassand. consult. art. 11. de Confes.*

*Equidem credo hac de re controversiam nullam fuisse futuram, si non salutaris hec consistendi medicina, ab imperitis, & importunis Medicis multis inutilibus traditiunculis infecta, & contaminata fuisset, quibus, conscientis (quas extricare, & levare debebant) Laqueos iniecerunt, & tanquam tormentis quibusdam excarnificarunt, — huic rei occurreretur, si pii tantum ac prudentes viri huic utilissimo & sanctissimo audiendæ confessionis & absolutionis impartiendæ Ministerio præficiantur. Id. ib.*

and tells us, that the onely help, and redress of this abuse is, if Godly and wise men were substituted, to this most holy and profitable ministry of hearing Confessions, and granting absolutions.

I shall make up this point with the testimony of a domestick Divine Dr *Willer*; who hath these words, *Confession of sins such as the Scripture alloweth, We acknowledge. There are private Confessions either to God alone, as Daniel confesseth, 9. 4. or for the easing of our Consciences, so man also, as to him whom we have offended, Matth. 5. 24. or to any other faithful man, the Minister, or some other that we may be holpen, and comforted by our mutual prayers; thus he. And surely this detection of sins is so evident an introduction for a remedy and ease against them, that even natural men with half an eye have discerned it, Plu-*

*Willer. Synops. controv. 14. Qu. 6. Sect. 2. of auric. Confession. p. 645.*

*Tu dicis vitioso homini, cum vitiis tuis te abde, morbum, insanabilem & pestilentem perfer, celaq. invidiam, vel superstitionem veluti palpitationes quasdam, & tradere te eis qui docere, vel sanare possunt, cave; At vero*

*sarch by name; Thou sayest unto a vitious man, hide thy self with thy vices, indure thy pestilent and dangerous disease, conceal the envy, and superstition, as certain pantings, and beware*

beware thou give not thy self to such as can instruct and heal thee: But the Ancients exposed their sick men to open view, that such as passed by, and had been sick of the same disease, or had given ease, and help thereunto, might signifie so much unto the sick man; and they affirm, that the art it self improved by such experience, to have been much better'd thereby, and increased. In like manner it may seem expedient to lay open the sins of our life, and the evil affections of the mind, that it may be lawful for any man, beholding and considering the same, to say, *Art thou angry? take heed of this; Art thou vexed with jealousy? do this; Art thou in love? I my self was so; but have repented. Now whiles some men hide their vices, deny, and conceal them, what do they but fasten them more thoroughly, and surely to themselves?*

*Prisci egrotos suos in publico proponebant, ut praevenitium quivis, si quid vel ipse in eodem morbo conflictatus, vel similiter laboranti opitulatus, medelae nosceret, id egrotanti significaret; aiuntq; artem hoc modo experientia adiuvante crevisse; hoc modo etiam vitae vitia animique pravis affectiones expediebat detegere, ut cuius liceret, (iis inspectis, & consideratis) dicere, iratus es? hoc cave; rivalitate vexaris? istud facito; amas? ipse quoque aliquando amavi, sed respui. Nam dum vitia sua negant, occultant, velant, penitus ea in sese defigunt. Plut. de occulte vivend. Xyland. Interp. p. 116.*

## CHAP. VI.

## The Contents.

*Divers offices and administrations in the Church. The peoples confession unto John at Jordan, wherein they were particular. The Confession of the Believers at Ephesus to Saint Paul. Proofs from the Fathers for Confession to the Priests of the Gospel. Such Confession withdraweth not from God, but leadeth to him. Testimonies of the worthiest Divines of the Church of England for confession, seconded with Divines of the Reformation from the Churches beyond the Seas.*

1 Cor. 12. 4, 5.

**G**ODS Church is a body consisting of divers members, so necessary as none can be missed; so distinct, as none can be confounded; so decent, as none can be vilified; so useful, as none can be spared; and so subordinate, as none can be translated: all of them distinguished in their places; functions and offices, and enabled with gifts for administrations, and with administrations for operations. In this holy calling there is, 1. τὸ χάρισμα, God inabling, whom he calleth; and ἡ διακονία, 2. the administration he calleth to Minister unto, for every vocation is an office, and employment; 3. and τὰ ἔργα, works and uses; for this office is not idle but laborious. Now all of these are diverse in themselves, but not in their Author. The gifts are not alike, yet from the same Spirit; the ministrations are different, yet from the same Lord; the operations are distinct, yet from the same God that worketh all in all. Amongst which the Lords Officers are divers; He hath set in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, fourthly, helps and governments, fifthly, diversities of Tongues. The Ministry is a function distinct from

In S. ordine  
discrimen gra-  
du & potestate.



from other offices in kind, and in it self in degree also; and the end whereof the common good of the Church; for to what purpose did our bountifull God command these gifts to come down from heaven in a full shower, but for the common profit, and salvation of mankind? why hath the blind his feet, and the lame his eyes, but by mutual help, and lending, to supply their own wants? in good sooth thy

Creator hath made thee a conduit for conveyance, not a cistern for inclosure; as our English not Seneca now, but Chrysostome preached. Recourse then must be had to each several Officer *pro re nata*, as the subject matter shall require. No man asketh of the hand to see, or of the foot to hear, or of the ear to handle; if thou need Spiritual gifts, repair unto the Lords Stewards; if healing of spiritual diseases, apply thy self to the Lords Physicians; if to be restored to the lost favour of God, address thy self to those that have the Word of Reconciliation: thou seeest (good Reader) whither this discourse tendeth, to send a Penitent with his sins in his mouth unto a Priest, who by reason of his place is to take notice thereof, as in its place shall more fully appear. Now onely for the lawfulness, and practice thereof we are to see what countenance the Scripture, Divines, Ancient and Modern, lend thereunto.

When John appeared in the wilderness preaching, and baptizing, there the people flock'd in such abundance, that the Cities and Villages seem'd to be desolate, & the wilderness replenish'd: Mat. 3. from Jerusalem the head City, and Juda the head tribe they resort unto him, and were baptized, confessing their sins to him no question, that baptized them. The Preachers text was Repentance, and his ministring of Baptism conducted thereunto; so near is the resemblance and affinity between Baptism and Repentance, that by the one is sometimes meant the other, and both have the promise remission of sins. The people submitting themselves to be baptized, confessed their uncleanness, when John saw that Christ would be baptized, he admired, as knowing of no cause he had so to do; there was no spot in him that needed to be purged.

purged with this *Laver*, which occasioned him first to forbid him, as if he should say, The whole need not this Physick, this Bath is for the diseased, and this Hospital for the weak and sickly; and then to propose this Question; *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?* q. d. I have need, thou hast none; I have need of thee, thou hast none of me; but for this people, they have need. Therefore as under the Law the offender brought his trespass offering unto the Priest, thereby implying his sin, so did the people confess their sins by being baptized into the remission of them; no less than a man should confess his felony in suing to his Prince for a pardon. Besides this act of theirs, they made a vocal expression of their sins, for no less do the words import, not intimating, but expressing, as the sinner did over the Sacrifice the sin that he had done; and so did they upon their baptism the sins that they had committed, and that not in a general way, how they had sinned, and were sinners, for that upon the matter is nothing now; because *non posse non peccare*, not to be able to refrain from sin, is a heavy yoke upon the necks of all the children of *Adam*; that we may safely give the lye to him that shall say he is without sin; this infirmity being as proper to our *corrupt* nature, as to laugh, and be reasonable to our *pure*; then for a man to confess, *I am a sinner*, is no more as the world now goes with him, than to say I am a reasonable, or a smiling creature. But 'tis one thing for a man to acknowledge himself to be a sinner, and another, to confess his sins unto another; Sins were then rehearsed unto *John*, not after a general fashion, but with specialty, and so much the article imports, *their sins*; that is, such as every man had committed in particular, and which for the present stuck upon his Conscience; As we say of Merchants coming to a Faire, *they opened their Wares*; meaning such special traffique as each particular Merchant traded in. And as the Believers are said to sell their possessions and goods, that is, such as every one was peculiarly seiled of: And those that used curious arts, *to burn their books before all men*; that is, such wherein each singular man was studied: So they confessed their sins, that is, such as they had done; *not that they were*

Testimonium  
penitentiae fuit  
haec confessio.  
Calvin.

ἔξομολογήσα-  
ντο τὰς ἁ-  
μαρτίας αὐ-  
τῶν.

Quod cuiusq;  
est, etiam pro-  
prium alicui  
esse dicitur.

Aliud est agno-  
scere se peccato-  
rem, aliud pec-  
cata sua alicui  
confiteri. Bel-  
lar. l. 3. de  
Pœn. c. 3. p.  
1360.

τὰς ἁμαρτί-  
ας.

τὰ κτήματα  
καὶ τὰς ὑδά-  
ξεις ἐπίπρα-  
νον. Act. 2.  
45.

τὰς βίβλους  
κατέκαυον.  
Act. 19. 19.



they need not to have *come* for audience, who heareth when we cry from the utmost parts of the earth; to whom the *East* and *West-Indies* are but as the right and left ear; their *coming* then to confess, argues that it was to such an one, that could not hear much further than he saw. They came then to the School of *Tyrannus*, where *Saint Paul* exercised, and there were heard. 2. And the contents of their confession were *their deeds*; that is, their *evil* deeds, for we heard it was a fright that drive them to this confession; and good actions are matter of hope, and not of dread: a sense of the punishment of sin in others drive them to a Conscience and confession of their own; thereupon *Chrysostom* expounds it in the testimony last alleged, *they accused themselves*; now if their deeds had been any other than sinful, the relating thereof had rather justified than condemned them; add hereunto the *Syriack Edition*, which expressly reads *offences*. 3. And for the *manner*, it skills not much whether it were privately performed, or in publick, the circumstances are more probable that it was publick; and very clear that it was in *specie* distinct; of some select, and special sins, though not of all; and very likely of such which they saw and heard were punished in others: and to which those *Levantine* Countreys were too much addicted, *viz.* Magicall charmes, and Conjurat[i]on; and in detestation of this sin, they brought their books which taught them such *curious arts*, and committed them to the open flames; & the using of two words, to *confesse* and (a) *show forth* give no less, and the latter word ἀναγγέλλω, intimating to set forth as in a Pageant the story of their lives; the Syriac word ܝܿܬܝܿܝܢ being of the same signification with the Hebrew 729 to *number*, q. d. numbring out their offences one after another: thus we have a confession of

sins, and that distinct, and that unto a Church-man, *Saint Paul*, whereupon the *Greek Schools* ground this exhortation; it behooveth every faithful man to utter his sins, and to submit himself to be censured for the same, so as he may commit them no more, that he may be justified, according as it is written,

2.

Metu divini  
iudicii territi  
errata sua pro-  
fessi, ac detesta-  
ti sunt. Bez.  
annot. in Act.  
19.

Syriaca editio  
disertis verbis  
reddidit offen-  
sas. Bell. l. 3. de  
Pen. c. 4.  
vide supra.

3.

(a) προτείνες.

Τὸ ἀναγγέ-  
λαι ὀρροῖ-  
ται πρὸς κρύ-  
πτειν.

Δεῖ πάντα πιστὸν λέγειν τὰς ἐαυτοῦ ἁ-  
μαρτίας, καὶ ἀποτάττειν διὰ τοῦ ἐαυτοῦ ἐ-  
λέγχειν, ὥστε μὴ ἐτι ποιεῖν τὰ αὐτὰ, ἵνα  
δικαιωθῇ καὶ τὸ ἐσθμύνειν, λέγει σὺ πρὸς  
τὸ τὰς ἁμαρτίας, ἵνα δικαιωθῇς. Oecum-  
enen. in Act. Ap. Tom. I. pag. 147.  
Paris 1631.

written. Declare thou thy sins first that thou mayest be justified. And Erasmus this collection; That anciently there was some confession made of an evil life, but that publick (as he imagined) and general, and that not exacted from any; howbeit Auricular confession now in use seemeth to have taken its beginning from certain consultations made with the Bishops in private, when any scruple lay upon the soul. The former part of his words making good what we purposed; that in the Primitive Church there was confession of sins unto the Pastor, we examine not whether private or publick, general or special, of some or of all offences. And the passage concerning the original of Clancular Confession will be considered of, in its proper place.

Thus far from the word of God, now from the words of holy men; & in the first place we will set *Dionysius Areopagita*, leaving out that controversie whether the works under his name be his or no, seeing all Divines confess the Author to be of great Antiquity: he therefore in an Epistle to *Demophylus*, reprehending his insolent carriage towards a Priest, and a Penitent, relateth the abuse thus: Thou (as thy letters mention) whilst a sinner falling down humbled himself unto the Priest, (I know not by what means standing by, against the discipline of the Church) didst spurn him back with thy foot, whereas he in a lowly manner (as becometh him) confessed that he came to seek the remedies for his sins. By which it is apparent, how the sinner humbled himself unto the Priest, sought the best remedies against sin, such as were repentance, pardon, and Ghostly counsel, which could not be well prescribed without making his case known unto the Priest, to whom he resorted for a remedy; where the contemptuous carriage of an insolent Deacon towards the poor Penitent that confessed,

*Vel hinc colligi potest fuisse & antiquitus nonnullam confessionem male actæ vitæ, sed apertam (ut opinor) & in genere, quam nec ipsam legimus exactam abs quoquam; Ceterum quæ nunc recepta est clancularia, & in aurem fit, videtur ex consultationibus privatis esse nata, quæ solent apud Episcopos fieri, si quis scrupulus urgeret animam. Erasmi annot. in Act. Apost. c. 19. p. 315.*

*Tu (ut tue literæ indicant) procidentem Sacerdoti impium, ut ais, atque peccatorem nescio quo pacto contra discipline ordinem astans, calce abiecasti, & repulisti, cum ille quidem verecundè (ut oportuit) fateretur se ad peccatorum remedia querenda venisse. Dionys. Epist. 8. Interprete Ambr. Camaldulense.*

fessed, and the Priest that received him, is rebuked in that Epistle.

*Origen* succeedeth, who describing seven sorts or means to obtain forgiveness of sins, whereof the last is repentance, writeth thus; *The seventh, though painful, and laborious, is remission of sins upon repentance, when a sinner watreth his couch with tears, and tears become his bread day and night; and when he blusheth not to shew his sins unto the Lords Priest, and to seek for Medicine, according to him who said, I said, I will confess, &c.* Against

*Est adhuc & septima licet dura, & laboriosa, per penitentiam remissio peccatorum cum lavat Peccator in lacrimis stratum suum, & sunt ei lacrimæ panes die ac nocte; & non crubescit Sacerdoti Dei indicare peccatum suum, & quærere medicinam, secundum eum qui ait, Dixi pronuntiabo adversum me, &c.*  
Origen. homil. 2. in Levit. com. l. p. 68.

this testimony there stands like a hand in the Margin, *Sacramental confession*, set there by *Gensbrard* the publisher of that Edition, to fetch his Reader over; as if Auricular Confession (as it now goes for current at Rome) had been alive in the days of *Origen*; doing herein, as sorry Painters when the Picture cannot shew it self, subscribe at the foot his name, whom they meant it for. Now how remote *Origens* meaning is from the present Roman practice, will better appear hereafter.

*Confiteamur singuli quæso vos, (fratres) delictum suum, dum adhuc qui deliquit in seculo est, dum admitti ejus confessio potest, dum satisfactio, & remissio facta per Sacerdotes apud Dominum grata est; convertamur ad Dominum mente totâ, & penitentiam criminis veris doloribus exprimentes, Dei misericordiam deprecemur.* Cypr. de laps.

*hoc ipsum apud Sacerdotes Dei dolenter & simpliciter confitentes, &c.*  
Cypr. ib.

pray unto God for mercy:

It is evident that this exhortation is to make confession unto the Priest, for he was to make the atonement, and procure a pardon, and for that a little before the *Father* commended their zeal, that laid open their Cabinet sins, the very thoughts of their heart full sadly, and sincerely unto Gods Priests; and my Reader will remember what *B. Rhenanus*, a man much versed in antiquity, and of a discerning spirit collected from these and such like passages from *Saint Cyprian*.

*Saint Cyprian* thus; *I beseech every one of you Brethren to confess his sin while life remaineth, and your confession may be admitted; whilst satisfaction and remission made by the Priest may be accepted with the Lord. Let us be converted unto the Lord with all our mind, and expressing the repentance of our sin with unsained sorrow,*

*Gregory*



Gregory Nyssen addresseth himself unto a sinner in these words: *Be sensible of thy present dis-*

*sease, afflict thy self all thou canst, seek also the mourning of such Brethren as are after thine own heart to help thee to liberty, shew forth thy bitter and excessive tears, that I may mingle mine; Take also the Priest unto thee to associate as a Father, and participate of thy afflictions. For what man can so falsely wear the title of a Father, and be intowed with so hard and adamantine a breast, as not to condole with his sorrowing children? Then after some passages, how a good Priest bewaileth their sin, as Jacob did at the sight of Josephs coat, and David upon the news of Absalons death, Eli his graceless sons, and Moses the rebellious*

*people; and that spiritual children are nearer to them that have begotten them in the Lord, then the fruit of the body can be to fleshly Parents: The way thus made, he exhorteth, Shew unto him [the Priest] boldly without blushing such things as have been hidden, display the secrets of thy soul, open thy concealed grief as to a Physician, he will have a care and be tender of thy reputation and safety.*

*Paulinus writing the Life of Saint Ambrose, makes relation of his behaviour in receiving Penitents, after this manner: Whosoever any came unto him, confessing their faults, to undergo their penance, he would shed tears in such abundance as to force the sinner to weeping; seeming as if he had fallen with him into the same offence. The causes of their sins which they confessed unto him he never opened his lips of, save unto the Lord onely, unto whom he interceded on their behalf. Blessed Father, were our Ghostly Fathers thus compassionate, and*

O

reserved,

Ἐπειδὴ δὲ γὰρ περὶ τὴν πενίαν  
σαν σε νόσον, συνέλεγον σου τὸν ὅσον δύ-  
νασαι, ζήτησον καὶ ἀδελφῶν ὁμοψύχων  
πένθῃ, βοηθῶν σοὶ περὶ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν,  
δείξον μοι πικρὸν σε καὶ δαφνίαν τὸ δά-  
κρυον, ἵνα μίξω καὶ τὸ ἐμὸν, λάβε καὶ ἡ  
ἱερέα κοινωνὸν τῆς θλίψεως ὡς πάτερ·  
τίς γὰρ ἕτως πάτερ θεοδότης, ἢ τὴν  
ψυχὴν ἀδαμάντιν, ὡς μὴ συνοδύουσαι  
τοῖς τέκνοις λυπημένοις— δειξὼν αὐτῷ  
ἀνευθεϊάως τὰ κεκρυμμένα, γύμνασον  
τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπόρρητα, ὡς ἱατρῷ πάθῃ  
δεικνύων κεκαλυμμένον, αὐτὸς ἐπιμελή-  
σεται καὶ τῆς εὐχομοσύνης καὶ τῆς δεξιότη-  
ας. *Greg. Ness. append. operum de*  
*pœnit. Paris. p. 175, 176.*

*Quotiescumque illi aliquis ad precipiendam  
penitentiam lapsus suos confisus esset, ita flebat,  
ut & illum flere compelleret; videbatur etiam  
sibi cum jacente jacere; causis autem crimi-  
num quas illi confitebantur, nulli nisi Domino  
soli, apud quem intercedebat, loquebatur.  
Paulin. in vita Ambrosii.*

reserved, they could not want Penitents. Thy discreet and zealous managing of the keys in the case of *Theodosius*, hath, and shall make thee famous to all posterity.

Saint *Basil* setting down the pious intention, and good pleasure of God for a sinners conversion, and the manner of that conversion to consist in repentance, and the fruits thereof, concludeth thus: *It is necessary to confess our sins to them who are*

Ἀναγκῶν  
ταῖς πεπιστευ-  
μένους ὁ δικο-  
νομίᾳ ἡ  
μυστικῶν τῶ  
Θεῷ ἐξομολο-

γῶν ταῖς ἀμαρτήματι, ὅτι γὰρ οἱ παλαιοὶ μετανοήσαντες ἐπὶ τοῦ ἁγίου ἐνείποντο πεπαικότες. γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν μὲν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, ὅτι τῷ βασιλεῖ Ἰωάννῃ, ἐξομολογῶντο τὰς ἀμαρτίας αὐτῶν, ἐν δὲ ταῖς περὶ ἐσθῆτος, τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, ὑφ' ὧν καὶ βαπτίζοντο πάντες. *Basil* ἀσκητ. ἐρωτησ. σ. π. η. pag. 543.

*So the Penitents of old are found to have done before holy men, for it is written in the Gospel that they confessed their sins to John the Baptist; and in the Acts, all of them to the Apostles, of whom they were baptized.*

### *Pacianus* in his *Paranesis* or Exhortation to Repentance,

Vos appello fratres, qui criminibus admissis penitentiam recusatis, vos (inquam) post impudentiam timidos, post peccata verecundos, qui peccare non erubescitis, & erubescitis confiteri. — Ecce iterum Apostolus ad Sacerdotem, manus citò nulli imponas, nec communices peccatis alienis. Quid facies tu qui decipis Sacerdotem? qui aut ignorantem fallis, aut non ad plenum scientiam probandi difficultate confundis. *Parian.* in paren. iive libel. de Pœnit.

*thus. I appeal unto you, Brethren, who having committed sins refuse repentance; to you (I say) that after impudence are afraid, and after sinning shamefaced, which blush not to sin, but blush to confess; and a little after; Behold what the Apostle saith to the Priest, Lay hands suddenly on none, lest thou participate of their sins; what wilt thou do deceiving the Priest? who either deceivest him as ignorant, or confoundest him as not fully instructed, with difficulty*

*of proving.*

Legimus in Le-  
uitico de lepro-  
sitis, ubi iubetur  
ut ostendant

se Sacerdotibus, & si lepram habuerint tunc à Sacerdote immundi fiant — sic & hic solvit & ligat Episcopus & Presbyter non eos qui insontes sunt vel noxii, sed pro officio suo cum peccatorum audierit varietates, sicut qui ligandus sit, qui ve solvendus. *Hieron Comment. in Matth. 16*

*them*

them unclean— So doth the Bishop and Priest bind and loose not such as are infected, and guilty; but when by virtue of their office having heard the diversity of sins, they may know who is fit to be bound and who to be loosed. These words will come under our hands again in the point of *Absolution*; here they stand to tell us that the Priest was made acquainted with the variety of sin, the thing intended.

Saint *Ambrose*, mentioning divers sins which amongst others are to be repented of, and abstained from after Repentance, hath these words. *A man not onely after Repentance ought to preserve himself inwardly from these sins, but before Repentance, while he is yet whole; for he knoweth not certainly if he shall be able to take his penance, and to confesse his sins to God and the Priest.*

*Non solum post penitentiam ab istis intus bono se observare debet, sed & ante penitenti-*

*am, dum sanus est, quia nescit si possit ipsam penitentiam accipere, & confiteri Deo & Sacerdoti peccata sua. Ambr. exhort. ad penit.*

Saint *Augustine* incountring that opinion, that because God knoweth all, heareth all, and pardoneth all, therefore inward repentance, and confession unto him is sufficient, without any external declaration thereof before man, reasoneth thus; *Let no man say to himself, I do it secretly, I do it before God, God who pardoneith me knows that I do it with my heart; was it therefore spoken without cause, whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven; are the keys therefore without cause given unto the Church of God? do we frustrate the Gospel of God? do we frustrate the words of Christ? do we promise that to you which he denieth you? do we deceive you? There is not (I think) any Christian living that dares to gainsay confession unto God, or the promise of forgiveness annexed thereunto. Let not then (good people) such Divines be mistaken, as to withdraw you from confession unto God, when they send you unto men. They put you not out of the way, but instruct you in the same;*

*Nemo sibi dicit occulte, ago apud Deum, ago, novit Deus qui mihi ignoscit, quia in corde ago: Ergo sine causa dictum est, quae solveritis in terra erunt soluta in caelo; ergo sine causa sunt claves datae Ecclesiae Dei? frustramus Evangelium Dei? frustramus verba Christi? promittimus vobis quod ille negat? nonne vos decipimus? Aug. hom. 49. ex. 50. cap. 3.*

think not then that by so doing you go from God to man, but by man to God; for your way you may misse of, for all your pretended skill, and need a guide; and being in your journey may be to seek, and doubtfull of your way, may ask of man where it lyeth. And if you stand so much of your immediate accesse unto God, and mercy, either deny the *means* which God hath appointed, or censure him of weakness, for instituting such *means* of so small use, that the end may usually be attained without them. Indeed the poor esteem of Reconciliation in the hand of Priesthood is such, that *Priests* may hang their harps upon the willowes, and wear their keys under their girdle; and there keep them till they rust, before any man crave the use. So low and flat seem the power of the keys, and the promise upon the same, which Christ bestowed upon the Church, in most peoples eyes; as if by this supine neglect of theirs they would frustrate, as much as in them lies, the Lords own ordinance; But more hereof hereafter.

In the dayes of *Leo* the first, who sate in the Chair at *Rome*, Anno Dom. 440. usq; ad an. 461. the discipline of publick *Exomologesis* was become too austere in those dainty times, and began to be confined to private walls, and ears; and for that change sundry reasons are rendred by *Leo*, which shall be alleaged when the institution of Auricular confession is debated: therefore after he had given order for the removal of publick confession, which he calls *improbabilis consuetudo*, a custome not to be allowed of, he resolveth, *That it is sufficient if the guilt of mens Consciences be declared in secret confession to the Priests alone; And concludeth, that Confession to be sufficient, which is rendred first unto God, and then unto the Priest, who comes in as an intercessor for the sins of the Penitent.*

Ne de singulorum peccatorum genere libellis scripta confessio publice recitetur, Cum

reatus conscientiarum sufficiat solis Sacerdotibus indicari confessione secreta—sufficit illa Confessio quæ primum Deo offertur, tum etiam Sacerdoti, qui pro delictis Penitentium etiam precator accedit, *Leo* Epist. 80. ad Episc. Campan.

Next to *Leo* the first of that name, I place *Gregory* the first of that name, and *Prelate* of the same *Sea* also; who alluding to the raising and rising of *Lazarus* from the Grave, saith thus; *To*

*Lazarus*

*Lazarus it is said come forth, as if it were distinctly said to every one dead in sin, why hidest thou thy guilt with n thy Conscience? go forth now by Confession, who list hid inwardly in thy self by dissembling. Let then the dead come forth; that is, let the sinner confesse his sin, and when he is come forth, let the disciples looke him, that the Pastors of the Church may remove the punishment he had deserved, that was not ashamed to confesse what he had committed.*

*Alcuinus* born in this Isle of Great Britaine, and deputed Professor at Paris by *Charlemaine*, who laid the foundation of that University; who writing to the Scots his Countrey-men, and commending much their chaste conversation amongst their secular affairs, nevertheless blameth them for not resorting to Confession, in this sort; *It is said that no man of the Laity will make his confession unto the Priests, whom we beleeve to have received from Christ, who is God, the power of binding and loosing, together with the holy Apostles.* As in Scotland the inhabitants are censured for their remissness; So in England, some about the same time are commended for the practise of Confession; and namely, one *Adamantius* in Bede, that being much terrified for grievous sins committed in his youth; He resorted unto a Priest, by whom he hoped the way of salvation might be shewed unto him, he confessed his guilt, and intreated that he would give him counsel whereby he might flye from the wrath of God which was to come. And in Ireland, for the glory of his Majesty's Dominions, Saint Bernard witnesseth; That *Malachias* bid of new institute the most wholesome use of confession, which before his time the Irish were ignorant of,

*Lazarus dicitur, veni foras, ac si aperte cuilibet mortuo in culpa diceretur, Cur reatum tuum infra conscientiam tuam abscondis? foras jam per confessionem egredere, qui apud te interius per abnegationem lates: veniat itaque foras mortuus, i. e. culpam confiteatur peccator, venientem vero foras solvant discipuli, ut Pastores Ecclesie ei poenitentiam debeant amovere quam meruit, qui non erubuit confiteri quod fecit. Greg. hom. super Evang. cum esset Sord.*

*Joan. Major. de Gest. Scottorum, lib. 2. c. 13.*

*Dicitur nimirum ex Lucis suam velle confessionem Sacerdotibus dare, quos à Deo Christo cum sanctis Apostolis ligandi solvendi que potestatem accepisse credimus. Alcuin. Epist. 23. edit. Henr. Canisii.*

*Accedens ad Sacerdotem, à quo sibi sperabat iter salutis posse demonstrari, confessus est reatum suum, petiitque, ut consilium sibi daret, quo posset fugere à ventura Dei ira. Bed. hist. Angl. l. 4. cap. 24.*

*Usus saluberrimus confessionis de novo instituit. Bern. in vita Malac.*

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or did neglect Add hereunto what Joannes Major saith of a Monastery up in Bedes times, where he professed; That before the death of any Religious person in that Covent there was a strange sound heard, which tolled all the Religious, (each man suspecting himself) to prepare them selves unto confession. Whether this sound were a false noise or

not, is not the question; (for mine Author avoucheth it rather for a populous rumor, then a credible report) but that whereof I take notice is, how upon any summons, or peril of death, confession was accounted a good preparation for a good end, and a quiet settling of the soul and Conscience.

Communem ple-  
bis opinionem,  
& non fidei

materiam recito. Joan. Major. de Gest. Scotor. lib. 2. cap. 12.

In primis confitendum Deo est, postea etiam Sacerdoti, propterea quod confessio quae fit Sacerdoti, in hoc nobis adminiculum praeber, ut accepto salutari ab eis consilio, saluberrimis poenitentiae observationibus, seu mutuis orationibus peccatorum maculas diluamus. Theodulp. lib. de Eccl. hist. observ. apud B. Rhenan. praef. ad Tert. de poenit.

Theodulphus Bishop of Orleance writeth thus; In the first place confession must be made unto God, next unto the Priest, because the confession that is made unto a Priest, so far aideth us, that receiving whole some counsel from them, we may by the wholesome observations of penance,

and by mutual prayers wash away the filth of sin. Thou seest here

(a) Βασι-  
λειον ἐπὶ οἷς  
ἡμετέραν τὴν  
ἐκείνῃ ψυχὴν,  
ἀγαθοεργεῖν.  
Clem. Alex.  
from. 2. pag.  
281.

Confession to a Priest, and another reason thereof besides absolution, that by his sacred advice, (a) the Penitent might be directed to bring forth such fruits of Repentance as may blot out the spots of his former sins. And such rules of direction were called *Canons penitential*, whereby a certain time was set down for each particular sin, for the lustration, and expiation thereof: and Beda mentioneth, that Theodorus sometimes Arch Bishop of Canterbury, composed Canons to this purpose, which he calleth *Peccantium judicia*,

Theodorus Archiepiscopus, Peccantium iudicia, quantis sc. annis pro unoquoque peccato quis poenitere debeat, mirabili & discreta ratione describit. Beda in Chron.

viz. how many years of penance belong to several sins. The Penitential it self, being reserved as I am informed, amongst the *Archiva* of that great ingrosser of Antiquity, Sir Robert Cotton; that Arch Bishop

Bishop in the Decrees is cited thus; *Confession made to God alone purgeth sins, but that which is made unto the Priest teacheth the means how they may be purged.* Hitherto we have trod the steps of Antiquity, and shall now second their authority with the judgment of later Divines of best account and estimation.

*Confessio que soli Deo fit, purgat peccata; ea vero que Sacerdoti, docet qualiter purgantur ipsa peccata.* De poen. dist. i. sect. quam inquit.

And first of all, the established doctrine of that Church whereof I am a member, and from which with Gods grace shall never deviate, is prescribed in the *Liturgie* before the administration of the holy *Communion*; where the *Minister* is to exhort the people, *That if there be any of them which cannot quiet his own Conscience, but requireth further comfort, or counsel, he should come to him, or some other discreet and learned Minister of Gods Word, and open his grief, that he may receive such ghostly counsel, advice, and comfort, as his Conscience may be relieved; and that by the ministry of Gods word he may receive comfort, and the benefit of absolution, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulnesse.* Here is an Exhortation to Confession, and that to the *Minister*, and that of sins *d/quieting* the conscience; and that to receive absolution, counsel, and consolation, to this end, that the Conscience may be settled, and the Scruple removed.

Church of England.

Communion Book exhortation before the receiving of the Lords supper.

In the next place is the *Defender* of that *Church*, who was as the *Angel of the Lord* to discern, and whose memory is a sweet perfume, King *James*, whose royal words are; *I acknowledge that there cannot be found a more sitting friend, to whose ears thou mayest commit thy sins, then a Godly and an honest Church-man, from whom thou mayest receive comfort, and forgiveness of sins by the power of the keys.* In the same place, the same gracious Author hath thus written; *I allow with Calvin of private Confession made unto a Church-man, (as I professed before)*

King James.

*Fateor neminem inveniri amicū aptiorē cuius auribus peccata deponas, quā hominē Ecclesiasticū, pium, & probū, unde & solatium percipias, & ex potestate clavium peccatorum r/missionem.* Medit. in Orat. Dom. p. 62. Edit. Lat.

Ego cum Calvinō confessionem privatam cetero Ecclesi-

ficio factam probo, (quāmodōdum antea professus sum) optaremque ex animo frequentiorē esse eam apud nos; rem citra controversiam præstantissimū usū, præsertim parandis bonarū animus ad sacram Synaxin. ib. p. 65.

and wish with all my heart it were more frequented by us; a thing without controversie of most excellent use, but most especially to prepare mens minds for the holy Communion. *Aurei Pectoris verba bracteata* words like apples of Gold in pictures of Silver, and deserve of all the subjects to him, and his flourishing progeny, ever to be remembred.

B. Ridley.  
Act. and Mon.  
edit. 2. p. 17-8.

Bishop Ridley a great and principal Agent in the reformation of the Liturgy, and who dipping his *Rocket* in his own blood, sealed the verity thereof with *Martyrdome*, in a Letter unto *West* sometimes his *Chaplain*, hath written thus; *Confession to the Minister, which is able to instruct, correct, comfort, and inform the weak, wounded, and ignorant Consciences, indeed I ever thought might do much good in Christs congregation, and so I assure you I think even at this day.*

B. Andrews,  
Serm. 4. before  
K. James upon  
a hifunday.

Reverend and ever to be revered Bishop *Andrews*, *o Mucronatus*, the *Sun*, and *Ap'lo* of Divines, preached thus; *He that shall minister comfort, and advice/soundly unto us, had need to be familiarly acquainted with the state of our souls: To go to a Lawyers reading, and to hear it, serves us not for our worldly doubts; nor to hear the Physick Lecture, for the complaints of our Bodies; No, we call them to us. we question with them in particular; we have private conference about our estates; onely for our soul-affairs it is enough to take our directions in open Churches, and there delivered in gross; private conference we endure not, we need not; One we must have to know thoroughly the state of our lands, and goods; one we must have entirely acquainted with the state of our body; in our souls it holdeth not; I say no more, it were good it did. Good indeed, if it seemed good to Authority.*

B. Lakes Serm.  
at Greenwich,  
upon Psal. 32.  
vers. 5. p. 139.

The Godly-learned Bishop *Lakes o Maxael'rus*, who hath left a name behind him as a precious ointment, and a light, whose lustre is still with us; taught the same Doctrine before the same *Royal Audiance*, in these words; *Our Church doth not condemn Confession as simply evil, and therefore in its Liturgie hath restored it to its native purity; onely it were to be wished that so far as the Church allows it, we would practise it; for I am persuaded that many live and dye in enormous sins, that never made any use of it, nor received any comfort from the power of the keys;*  
the

the confessing unto the Lord doth not exclude confessing unto man, so the due limitation be observed.

The next is he who is now clothed in white rayment, & Sealo-  
yotal<sup>o</sup>, who hath challenged from Nazianzen not to be the  
onely Divine, as he from him not to be the first, who before  
his last, and useful Treatise of the Sabbath, in his Preface inscri-  
bed to the most eminent Star in our Churches Horizon, and the  
highest Watchman in her Tower, amongst others hath this direc-  
tion; There might also be a profitable use of some private form  
of Pastoral collation with their flock, for their direction, and re-  
formation in particular spiritual duties, such as was private Con-  
fession in the ancient Church.

These Fathers are gathered to their Fathers; Our Church  
hath these lamps yet burning (and long may they last) that  
follow: First, our Christian Antiquary, the L. Primate of Ar-  
mach, who upon that exhortation made in the Service-book of  
the Church, saith thus; It appeareth that the exhorting of the  
people to confess their sins unto their ghostly fathers, maketh no such  
wall of separation between the ancient Doctors and us; but we may  
well for all this be of the same Religion they were of. Again, No  
kind of Confession either publick, or private, is disallowed by us,  
that is any way requisite for the due execution of that ancient power  
of the keys, which Christ bestowed upon the Church. And again,  
Neither the Ancient Fathers, nor we, do debar men from opening  
their grievances unto the Physicians of their souls, either for their  
better information in the true state of their disease, or for the quiet-  
ing of their troubled Consciences, and for receiving further direc-  
tion from them out of Gods word, both for the recovery of their  
present sickness, and for the prevention of the like danger for the  
time to come: which doctrine he learnedly asserteth, and vin-  
dicateth from the fringes, and dregs of Popish mixture, and su-  
perstition.

The grave and godly Prelate, My Lord Bishop of Duresme, who well knoweth in Polemical differences between the Re-  
med and Roman Churches, to separate the Chaff from the Corn;  
stateth the question concerning confession thus; It is not que-  
stioned between us whether it be convenient for a man burthened  
with sin, to lay open his Conscience in private to the Minister of

Bishop White,  
Prefat. ad R.  
Archiep. Cant.  
prefixed to  
the book of  
the Sabbath.

Bishop usher,  
L. Primate of  
Ireland, Anf.  
to the Jesuites  
challenge.  
pag. 81, 82.

Id. ibid. pag.  
38.

Bish. Morton  
Appeal. l. 2.  
c. 14.

God, and to seek at his hands both counsel, and instruction, and the comforts of Gods pardon. But whether there be as from Christs institution such an absolute necessity of this private confession, both for all sorts of men, and for every particular sin known, and ordinary transgression, so as without it there can be no remission, or pardon hoped for from God; and so reduceth the difference betwixt Protestants and Papists unto two heads, 1. of necessity, 2. of possibility, thus; *The Papists impose a necessity of confession absolute de jure Divino, of all sins, with all circumstances, which is a tyrannie, and impossible, and a torture to the Conscience. The Protestants do acknowledge (saith he) the use of private confession, but with a double limitation, and restraint; 1. the first is the foresaid freedom of Conscience, 2. the second is the possibility of performance: by all which passages that great Scientist Man, doth not remove confession, but certain errors crept in of late from the same, as namely in that it is averred, 1. to be of divine institution, 2. of absolute necessity, 3. extending to all men, all known sins, and all circumstances, 4. and that it must be taken as a necessary mean either in deed, or desire, for the remission of sins; which tares sown in the field, his Lordship would have discerned, if not separated, from the duty it self; the continuance whereof he alloweth, and prescribeth.*

B. Montagu  
Appeal. pag.  
199.

Bishop Montagu, ὁ πολυμαθής, hath asserted this doctrine *nsq; ad invidiam*, of whom we may reckon not as a witnesse, but Confessor also, because he hath written thus; *It is confessed that private Confession unto a Priest is of very ancient practice in the Church, of excellent use and benefit, being discreetly handled; we refuse it to none if men require it; if need be to have it; we urge and perswade it in extremis; we require it in case of perplexity, for the quieting of men disturbed in their Consciences. I know not of what latitude in some mens conceits Popery is, for censuring these words as a smack thereof; for he approves of it, if discreetly handled; imposeth no more need thereof, than to such as need it; urging it not by constraint, but by inducement, and perswasion; and that not upon all men, but upon such as are disturbed and perplexed in Conscience, and not of all sins, but such as lie disquietly in the bosome. Great parts are as often envied and traduced; as admired; especially when*



when men of small parts usurp the censure. A wise and learned man contents himself with one onely meet Auditor, and approver, and if he meet not with so much, quiets himself in his own worth, and Conscience; in the testimony whereof there is more solid comfort, than in the vain applauses, or reproches of a sandy multitude.

In the book well known by the *Practice of Piety*, we read such directions in this present behalf, which sincerely performed were the practice of piety indeed, and they are as followeth; In a doubtful title thou wilt ask counsel of thy skilful Lawyer; in peril of sickness thou wilt know the advice of thy skilful Physician; and is there no danger in dread of damnation for a sinner to be his own Judge? and a little after, *Luther saith, That he had rather lose a thousand worlds than suffer private confession to be thrust forth of the Church; our Church hath ever most soundly maintained the truth of this doctrine.* And again, *Verily there is not any means more excellent to humble a proud heart, nor to raise up an humble spirit, then this spiritual conference betwixt the Pastor and his people committed to his charge; if any sin trouble thy conscience, confesse it unto Gods Minister, ask his counsel, and if thou dost truly repent, receive his absolution, and thou doubt not but in foro Conscientiæ, thy sins be as really forgiven on earth, as if thou didst hear Christ himself in foro judicii, pronouncing them to be forgiven in heaven.* Qui vos audit, me audit; try this, and tell me, whether thou shalt not find more ease in thy conscience, than can be expressed in words; did profane men consider the dignity of this divine calling, they would the more honour the calling, and reverence the persons.

Thus is the doctrine of the *Mother justified* by her children, and lest any should think our Church and Divines stand here alone, I will adjoyn some forraign testimonies. The Doctrine of the Protestants in Germany is related in the *Augustan Confession* thus; *We retain confession chiefly for absolution, which is quod de singulis auctoritate divina pronunciat potestas Clavium; quare impium esset ex Ecclesia privatam absolutionem tollere; neque quid sit remissio peccatorum, aut potest is Clavium intelligunt, si qui privatam absolutionem aspernantur.* Augustan. Confess.

Ἀρκὴ τοῦ  
γνωσκῶ καὶ  
εἰς μόνον  
ἀκριβῆς ἐν-  
γεθῆν. Clem.  
Alex. Strom.

l. i. p. 215.

Practice of  
Piety.

pag. 762.

Pag. 763.

Occulta confessio quæ modò celebratur, etsi probari ex Scripturis non potest, miro tamen modo placet, & utilis, immò necessaria est, nec vellem eam non esse, immò gaudere eam esse in ecclesia Christi, cum sit ipsa afflictis conscientis unicum remedium. Luther. cap. Babylon. tom. 6. fol. 109.

Luke 10. 16.

Reformed  
Churches of  
Germany.

Nos confessionem retinemus præcipue propter absolutionem quæ est verbum Dei,

Gods word, that the power of the keys denounceth by authority divine, of each person in particular; wherefore it were wickedly done to take private absolution out of the Church: nor do they understand what remission of sins, or the power of the keys meaneth, if so be they condemn private absolution. And the manner observed in the German Churches is set forth by Chemnitius

Private Confessionis usus apud nos servatur, ut generali professione peccati, ex significatione penitentiae petatur absolutio; cumque non sine iudicio usurpanda sit clavis, vel solvens, vel ligans, in privato illo colloquio Pastores explorant Auditorum iudicia, an recte intelligant de peccatis exterioribus & interioribus, de gradibus peccatorum, de stipendio peccati, de fide in Christum; deducuntur ad considerationem peccatorum; explorantur an serio dolcant de peccatis, an iram Dei timeant, & cupiant illam effigere; an habeant propositum emendationis; interrogantur etiam si in certis quibusdam peccatis herere existimantur, traditur ibi doctrina, & exhortatio de emendatione, queritur vel consilium, vel consolatio in emendationibus conscientiae, & tali confessioni impartitur absolutio. Exam. Conc. Trid. part. 2. pag. 195.

thus; The use of private Confession is with us preserved, that upon a general confession of sin, and intimation of Repentance, absolution may be desired; and since that the keys, whether binding, or loosing, may not be used without judgment, in that private conference the Pastors sift into the discretion and judgment of their Auditors, whether they rightly understand betwixt internal sins and external; as also the degrees in sin, and the wages thereof, and of faith in Christ; they are brought into a consideration of their offences, they are tried if they truly repent them of their sins, and stand in awe of Gods wrath, and desire to flee from the same. If they have any purpose

of amendment, they are further interrogated, if any particular sins stick upon them; the doctrine and exhortation to amendment is there delivered, counsel and consolation is there sought for overburthened consciences, and upon such a Confession there is granted an absolution

B. Rhenanus.

Quam soluterrimam esse nemo potest inficiari, si morositatem, & scrupulositatem nimiam amputes. Quid enim, per Deum immortalem, utilius habere possit Ecclesia ad continendam disciplinam? Quid commodius, quam privaram istam confessionem ad populum in necessariis erudiendum? ubi borule spatio plus proficit Laicus, quam triduanâ concione. — Mihi libet discipline encomium apud Cyprian. accommodare confessioni, ut dicam eam retinaculum fidei, ducem itineris salutaris, fomitem, & nutrimentum bonae indolis, magistrâ virtutis. B. Rhen. prefat. ad Tertull. de poenit.

Beatus Rhenanus, a great Secretary to ancient learning, treating of private confession, and from whence it derived its original, falls into these words; Which no man can deny to be very wholesome, if too much austereness, and scrupulosity therein

were

were cut off; for, in the name of God, What can be more profitable to uphold Ecclesiastical discipline? What more fit than private confession to instruct the people in points necessary to be known? where a Lay-man shall be more edified in an hours space, than at a three-dages Sermon — May it be lawful for me to bestow the praise Cyprian bath of Discipline, upon confession; and to call it the retentive of faith, the guide of a saving journey, the seed, and nursery of good behaviour, and the mistress of virtue. I am not ignorant that the Treatise it self containing this passage is by expresse order from *Index Expurgatorius* taken off the file, as a discourse not capable of a Roman salve, but needing the sponge throughout, with a deleatur. Their handling of Authors old and new, is much like the *Turkish* policy, in depriving Christian Parents of their Children, and those infants of their virilities, by castrating them, and training them up to be Janizaries, and persecutors of their own unknown bloud, and Religion. Such are their dealings with the Doctors of the Church, cutting off their masculine expressions, and setting them against themselves in their own *teneis* also.

*Argumentum libri de penitentia totum expungatur, nam commodè repurgari non potest. Ind. expurg. Martini, 1584.*

Calvin hath left his mind behind him thus; *Although Saint James hath not named any man into whose bosome we may empty our selves, leaving the choise free, of any we shall think meetest. Within the fold of the Church; yet because the Pastors usually are deemed more fit than others, therefore are they to be chosen above others. I say to be preferred before others, because they are designed by the Lord to the calling of the Ministry, from whose lips we receive instructions to subdue, and correct our faults, and consolation upon assurance of pardon. — Let every believer then remember that it is his duty, that if he stand so in-*

*Tamen si Jacobus neminem nominatim assignando in cuius sinum nos exponeremus, liberum permittit electum, ut ei constitemus qui ex Ecclesie grege maxime idoneus fuerit visus, quia tamen Pastores pre aliis ut plurimum iudicandi sunt idonei, potissimum etiam nobis eligendi erunt; dico autem idèd pre aliis apostolos, quia Ministerii vocatione nobis à Deo designantur, quorum ex ore erudiamur ad subigenda & corrigenda peccata, tum consolationem ex venie fiducia percipiamus. — Id officii sui unusquisque fidelium meminit, si in privatum angitur & affligatur peccatorum sensu, ut se explicare nisi alieno adiutorio nequeat, non negligere quod illi à Domino offertur remedium, nempe, ut ad se sublevari dum privata confessione apud suum pastorem utatur, ac ad solatia sibi adhibenda privatum eius*

*oracram imploret, cuius officium est, & publice & privatim populum Dei Evangelicè doctrinâ consolari. Calvin. Instit. lib. 3. cap. 4. Sect. 12.*

wardly prick'd, and afflicted with the sense of his sins that he cannot deliver himself without help from without, nor to neglect that remedy which is offered by God unto him, namely for to ease himself, that he make use of private Confession to his Pastor, and implore his assistance, that he may take some comfort, whose office it is both privately and publickly to comfort the people of God with the doctrine of the Gospel.

Zanchy beats the same path with Calvin; for after he had shewed what confession of sins is, and to what end it is made unto the Minister, reflecting upon those words of Saint James,

*Licet propriè sentire videatur, ut nostras infirmitates alter alteri communicantes, quicunque ille sit Sacerdos vel non, consilio & consolatione mutua nos juvemus; tamen quia Pastores Ecclesie pre aliis idonei sunt ut plurimum, & præter hoc habent etiam ministerium absolvendi, idèd hos potissimum nobis diligendos jubet Apostolus; immò ad hoc nobis à Patre nostro Deo ordinati, & instituti sunt Ministri verbi & Sacramentorum, ut quotiescunque conscientia nostra peccatis afflictatur, premitur, consolationeque & peccatorum remissione indiget, ad ipsos tanquam præsentés Christi legatos mandato reconciliationis predictos, recurramus; eis tanquam Christo ipsi corda nostra aperiamus, peccata confiteamur, infirmitates nostras deregamus, petamusque tanquam à Christo ipso consolationem, consilium, absolutionem in nomine Christi, illis enim dixit Christus, potestatem absolvendi tradens, Ioan. 20. Accipite S. Spiritum, &c. & Matth. 18. Quæcunque ligaveritis, &c. Zanch. compend. loc. Theolog. Neustadii 1598. pag. 459, 460.*

writeth thus; Although in a proper sense it seemeth our infirmities may be detected to any person whatsoever (be he Priest or not) thereby to relieve our selves with mutual help and comfort; yet because the Pastors of the Church are for the most part the fittest men, and moreover have the Ministry of absolution; therefore the Apostle commandeth us to make choise of them especially: To this end are they ordained, and instituted by God our Father, Ministers of the word and Sacraments, that so often as our Conscience shall be troubled, over-pressed with sin, or need comfort and forgiveness, we might have recourse unto them as Ambassadors of Christ, and having the mandat of reconciliation: To them let us open our hearts as unto Christ himself, let us confess our sins, let us detect our infirmities, and let us crave

from them as from Christ himself consolation, and counsel, and in the name of Christ absolution; for so them hath Christ said John 20. Receive the holy Ghost, &c. And Matth. 18. whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c. And so thou seest (good Reader) this assertion compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses.

## CHAP. VII.

*Concerning the institution, necessity, and extent of Confession; and is divided into three Sections.*

**H**itherto have we cleared certain positive truths concerning confession of sins, approved by the suffrages, and general vote of all, or the most principal of all Divines, *viz.* 1. That sins ought to be confessed, and ever acknowledged unto God, because he ever is offended, and alwayes able and ready to pardon. 2. Next, unto Man also by way of *Reconciliation*, when he is wronged; and by way of *recognition*, when he is able and willing with discreet words like apples of gold, to counsel and comfort wounded spirits. 3. And amongst men, to the *Priests* and *Ministers*, who by their place and function, are Instruments of Reconciliation, God having so appointed, that by them a *penitent* should receive news of pardon, and restored favour. And here my labour might have ceased, there being enough in these positions for a Christians practice, and a Penitents relief. And here the Period should have been, had not the *Envious*, and superstitious *Man* mingled these truths with tares. I say not whiles the *husband-men*, the *Ancient Fathers* of the Church slept, but rather, after such time as they fell asleep in the Lord, abuses privily crept in, (Confession being carried privately and closely) of such consequence, as have welnigh brought the duty it self out of Credit, at least altogether out of practice, and have caused the same to be laid by for many years; that it is hard to say, whether the neglect thereof, for the adjacent Superstition, hath not been more prejudicial to the growth of grace in the Church of God, than the usage thereof could have been together with the superstition. And whether the *Labours* Matth. 13. 30. *vers* had not done better, to have suffered both to grow together, and to have reprieved the Felonious Mother for the Infants sake in the womb, than by signifying their dislike so highly

of

of the abuses, to permit the discipline it self to be abolished. But now if that rust may be filed off, and if the pure juyce of the grape may be defecated from the dregs of corruption, there can be no reason given why the duty should not again take place, and be restored to its wonted practice. The wisdom of the *Correctors* appearing in the discreet parting of the matter it self from the abuse, and in restoring the same to its former place, and lustre; my poor thoughts have ever esteemed of them for poor *Reformers*, that

shall weed up both tares and wheat together; like such indiscreet *Zelots* that pull down Churches, because formerly abused, against *Christs* example, who chased forth the *Buyers* and *Sellers*, without any speech of the destruction of the *Temple*: an even, and just hand must be carried by such, as take that office upon them, lest pious ordinances be swept away in the mass, and rubbage of pretended superstition. And I think I may say of Confession now in use in the Church of *Rome*, as *Aristobolus Cassandram* did of a fountaine at *Miletum*, which the inhabitants called *Achilleium*, whereof the water which streamed above was very sweet, but that which remained at the bottome very salt and brinish; some things flow good therein, but the Roman dregs are bitter.

And for the better discovery thereof we must look over the same again, and handle three things διαρρήδην, openly, and distinctly; 1. The institution thereof, by whom, and of what authority it is; 2. Next, the necessity thereof, how far forth it is required, and what danger may arise upon the abuse, and discontinuance thereof; 3. And lastly the extent; whether all sins, and the circumstances of each sin fall under the verge and charge of confession. The consideration of these points will give great light to descry the misdemeanours in the practice thereof.

SECT.

Il faut distinguer entre la chose & la corruption qui la suit, laquelle il faudra retrancher, laissant la chose mesme, & non la prohiber. Da. Buchanan. L. histoire de la Conscience, p. 123.

Ἐν Μιλίῳ πρὶν ἔιναι, ὥς τὸ μὲν ῥεῦμα ἔιναι γλυκύτατον, τὸ ὑποφεινὸς ἀλμυρὸν. Athenæus Deipnos. lib. 2. pag. 43.

Punctum agendum non pre-cavido.



# SECT. I.

## The Contents.

*The Decrees of the Tridentine Council for Divine right, and authority of Confession. The Anathema's, held too severe by some moderate Romanists. Publick Exhomologesis wilepended by those Fathers. The School-mens faintness in resolving for the divine institution of Auricular Confession. The Canonists plant the same upon the universal tradition of the Church. Divines siding with the Canonists. Oppugners of Auricular Confession in former ages. Pretences of Divine authority from places of Scripture examined. Different proceedings in the Court of Conscience from earthly Tribunals. Special cognizance of all sins not a necessary antecedent at all times to Priestly Absolution. God pardoneth many sins immediately never spoken of to a Priest. Difference of Popish Divines concerning the matter and form in Penance, prove to be no such thing as Sacramental confession, which reacheth not higher than the Lateran Council. Confession of sin of the same institution as Repentance is. Divine institution manifold. In what sense Confession may be said to be of Divine institution.*

**T**He Church of Rome (or the most in that Church) farther this imp upon *Christ* himself, and the institution thereof from no meaner an *Author*, & thereupon make it a principal part of a special Sacrament, which they call the *Sacrament of Penance*; and they have so strong a fancy that it is a Sacrament, and because it is so, or rather because they will have it so, it must be a divine ordinance, and of

Q

Christ

Christ's institution. Indeed if Confession did justly deserve that title, and inscription of a Sacrament, we should not stick to give unto God the things that are Gods; it being a *Maxime* in Christianity, that the Sacraments of the Church are of Divine institution; all the doubt is, whether Confession can assume so much justly unto it self, as to be the essential part of any Sacrament, or no; and in this Inquisition we are to take these steps, The first, to enquire whether private Confession of sin appear to have been any where instituted by Christ. And again, if it may be demonstrated from the word of God, that there is any such Sacrament ordained by him, whereof private confession sustaineth such a part, as is reported in the Church of Rome. For the first it is very true the lawful use thereof depends upon the Institution; for God forbid but that his Institutes should be followed, and his precepts duly observed. *It is good,*

*Bonum, atque optimum est quod Deus precipit; audaciam existimo de bono Divini precepti disputare, neque enim quia bonum est, idcirco auscultare debemus, sed quia Deus precipit; ad exhibitionem obsequii prior est Majestas divine potestatis.* Tert. l. de Pœn. c. i.

*yea very good (saith Tertullian) that God commandeth; I hold it impudence once to dispute, and question the goodness of Divine Precepts; nor ought we to hearken thereunto because it is good, but because God commandeth, the Majesty of his power must conduce to*

*the performance of our duty.* With God is the authority to command, and with us the glory of obedience. The onely doubt is, if God instituted any such thing, and that mans inventions are not taught for Divine precepts. The Council of Trent,

*Dominus Jesus Sacerdotes sui ipsius vicarios reliquit, tanquam praesides, & Judices, ad quos omnia mortalia crimina deferantur, qui pro potestate clavium sententiam pronuntient. — Constat Sacerdotes judicium hoc incognita causa exercere non posse.* Conci<sup>l</sup>. Trid. cap. 5. de Confes.

that popish *Cynosura* hath decreed Auricular Confession to be of absolute necessity from ordinance divine, and the Institutor Christ, who by investing his Apostles with the power of the keys then created this Court of conscience, submitted all sinners to this jurisdiction, gave the Priests power to hear,

and determine of all and all manner of sins, and the people a command to accuse, and lay open the least sinful actions, and fractions before these Judges, whom he hath made Lord Keepers of this *privy seal*; where the proceedings for the trial of

sins

sins and punishments thereof are carried exceeding privately.

And that God hath not commanded, nor doth the Church now a dayes require open confession, and open penance, and it would be an inconsiderate act to injoyne the same by any humane Law.

Out of which Decree have been hatched these Anathema's; The first against all such, as shall deny clancular confession to have been enacted by Divine authority, or not to be necessary upon the same ground. The second fulminates against those, that shall gainsay such a Confession, as necessarily required for the forgiveness of sins, however they may approve thereof for the instruction, and comfort therein, and believe it of old to have been observed, that CANONICAL satisfaction might be imposed. The third Ban is upon those that affirm the Confession of all sins (as the Church observeth) to be impossible, and that it is but a humane tradition, and to be abolished. This is the doctrine of that Councils Canons, and Decrees. Where had those Fathers been as ready to prove, as reprove, and to confirm, as Censure, what they Anathematized, sure their thundrings would have been less, and lightningings more. Nor would the Divines of Lovian, and Colcign then assembled have desired more moderation in those Prelates, both in compiling the decree, as the Canon, for avoiding of Scandal in the Catholics, and in giving less advantage to the adversary in objecting what Divines could not easily answer. For is it not strange that out of those words of Christ in John 20. A Commission should issue to all Priests, with power to judge; and to all Christians with command to appear at this Court, to indict themselves of all they are conscious of, and to undergo the Priests Penance, and

*Non est hoc divino precepto mandatum, sed satis consultè humanà aliquà ioge præcipitur, ut delicta, præsertim secreta, publicè confessione aperienda, Concil. Trid. ib.*

*Si quis negaverit Confessionem Sacramentalem vel institutam, vel necessariam esse jure divino, Can. 1.*

*Si quis dixerit ad remissionem peccatorum necessarium non esse jure divino confiteri omnia & singula peccata, Can. 2.*

*Si quis dixerit confessionem omnium peccatorum (qualem Ecclesia servat) esse impossibilem, & traditionem humanam, & à piis abolendam, &c. Can. 3.*

*Cavendum Patribus nè adversariis materiam præbeant ea obijciendi, quæ Theologis non promptum sit refellere; quin potius eà moderatione utendum, tam in doctrina, quam in canone, ut Catholicis ipsis offensionem non sint. Hist. lat. Concil. Trid. p. 283.*

*Climax prius  
conficiendus est  
bene longus, &  
duccendus Sori-  
tes sesquipeda-  
lis, ut detur ista  
conjugere.*

*Et si Christus non vernerit quam aliquam de-  
dicta sua publicè confitei possit, non est tamen  
hoc divino præcepto mandatum, nec sitis con-  
sultè humanâ aliqua lege præciperetur. Con-  
cil. Trid. ib.*

sentence; surely the ladder must be well framed, where such rounds are, and the links strongly set together, that shall draw on such a chain, and train of consequences. But the indiscretion of these *Fathers* in one thing can never be enough admired; in debasing of *publick Confession*, and reconciliation as commanded by no law of God, *nec imperantium bono futurum*, nor should it be well done for any to command the same, whereas the *Fathers* truly so called onely countenanced, and esteemed this, when the other was hardly hatched; of this in their writings there is frequent mention, but of that (now *Rome's* darling) scarce any foot-steps appear; For let any living *Proctor* on that *Council's* behalf resolve me, why publick Confession of sin should be but permitted by *Christ*, and the *Private* by him enjoined; why a *Magistrate* should do ill in making a law for *solemn Confession*, and *Christ* institute and command the *Auricular*? Can that Confession

confined unto private walls be of greater virtue, than that which breaks forth on the house tops? or do the *keys* unlock better in a corner, than in open view? Or shall a sinful story told in secret, come by a pardon sooner, than that which is divulged before all? Or shall the Absolution of a Priest, granted in a Chamber, or a Closet, prevaile more than a Reconciliation made by the Bishops and Priests in the open Church? No less impudence is to be found in the words following, that by the holiest and ancientest *Fathers*, secret Sacramental Confession (as it is now used, and ever hath been in the Church) hath been always commended. Let those old records be compared with this new practice, and then judge of the integrity of these new *Fathers*.

We will enquire what news there was of this ordinance before the opening of that *Council*, and whether the *Schoolmen* are confident, or a little scrupulous upon whom to father it. *Scotus* makes a question from whence the *Mandat* of Confession is derived, from the law of God, or from the Churches constitution; and this latter he would approve of, if two rubs

*Quo præce-  
pto tenetur quis  
ad confessio-  
nem?*

lay

lay not in his way: 1. That the Church would not have made so bold as to have imposed such a burden upon the Consciences of any, without express warranty from her Spouse?

The true and chaste Church indeed would not have adventured without her husbands privy; but the Church of Rome hath set upon greater matters than this comes to. The treading upon *Emperours* necks is as great a daring as the trampling upon the Conscience. The *Popes* keys have gone beyond *Peters*, not onely to excommunicate, but deprive Princes; locking them forth of the Church, and their *Regal Throne* too: Such instances as these set forth the impudence of that Scrumper.

2. His other scruple was for that he knew not *when*, and *where* the Church imposed that precept: for this scruple, let him cast his eyes back upon a Council held not long before his time, and there he shall read it decreed for *bo:b* (exes once a year to come to

Confession. And there that the time was instituted, and not the duty is (with reverence to a doughty *Sorbonist*) unto a judicious understanding a thin, and poor evasion. By the way take notice Christian Reader, of

that large assertion of

*Scotus*, that there cannot easily be found any decree of Council, or precept of the Church extant for Confession; thence he proceeds to the *Glossator*

upon *Gratian*, and acquaints us with his opinion, viz. It were better held, that Confession was instituted by a kind of universal tradition of the Church, than from any authority of the Old or New Testament. And that it was taken upon the trust of Tradition rather than ready payment

of the Scripture, the not admitting of any such custome in the Greek Church, brought the *Glossator* to that mind; for that Church would not wittingly cast aside what

*Quod confessio non cadit nisi sub præcepto Ecclesiæ, non potest faciliter improbari, nisi quia Ecclesiæ non attentasset tam arduum præceptum imponere omnibus Christianis, nisi esset præceptum divinum.*

*Quia non invenitur ubi ab Ecclesiâ imponatur istud præceptum. Concil. Lateran.*

*Confession n'a point esté instituée en ce concil.; ains le temps seulement ya esté déclaré, auquel, il la faillloit faire. D.Bels Carefme, tom. 2. p. 721.*

*Nec Canonista facile inveniret aliquod consilium, vel præceptum propriè, ubi exprimitur præceptum de Confessione faciendâ.*

his opinion, viz. It were

*Meliùs dicitur eam institutam à quidam universali Ecclesiæ traditione, potius quàm ex Novi Testamenti vel Veteris auctoritate. De pœnit. dist. 5. in principio.*

*Confessio non est necessaria apud Græcos, esset autem necessaria si præceptum de ea esset ex auctoritate Scripturæ. Gloss. ib.*

Gods.

*Videtur rationabilis tenere, quod Confessio cadit sub precepto divino positivo.*

Gods word imposed. After all this *Scotus* turns to the other side, and utters this faint opinion; *It seemes more reasonable to hold, that Confession may fall under a Divine positive precept.* A luke-warm assertion, not firmiter tenere, constantly to believe, but *rationabilis*, more reason for it, and not *teneretur* it must be held, but *videtur* it may seem, it is so, but as it seemeth; and *cadat, non cadit*, it may fall under a divine precept, and it may not fall out so: what it seemed unto *Scotus*, I know not, but it seemeth unto me, that the faith upon the divine ordinance of Confession was then but of tender growth, and not fully ripe till the dayes of the Council of *Trent*. At length discarding some of the usual arguments, weakning others, and delivering some new ones of his own, (whereof the Reader by and by amongst others shall have a reckning) he resolveth all his

*Vel igitur tenendum est, quod sit de jure divino promulgato per Evangelium; vel, si illud non sufficiat, quod est de jure divino positivo promulgato a Christo Apostolis, sed Ecclesie promulgato per Apostolos absque omni Scriptura, sicut multa alia tenet Ecclesia ore tenus per Apostolos sibi promulgata sine Scriptura. Scot. lib. 4. d. 17. Qu. Unica, Sect. in ista.*

disputes into this uncertain conclusion; *Either it must be held, confession to be of divine right promulgated by the Gospel, or (if that suffice not) that it is of divine positive law promulgated by Christ unto the Apostles; and by the Apostles unto the Church, without any Written Scripture; as there are many points which the Church imbraceth,*

*(too many) delivered by word of mouth from the Apostles, without any Scripture at all.* Thus is the gentle Reader left unto his own choise, which opinion to trust unto, whether confession belong unto the Scriptures, or Tradition; and were I a *Romanist*, (considering what Confession is now come to in that Church) my thoughts would pitch upon the latter as the best cover; But here is the inconvenience; if a Sacrament be *verbum visibile* (and this they will needs have to be a Sacrament) it were but a sandy foundation to lay the sabrick thereof upon *verbum invisibile* unwritten tradition. Thus goeth the case with *Scotus*, not altogether after the *Roman* cut; and hereof the *Cardinal* gives a reason; *Because he and other Writers lived before the celebration of those Councils, wherein these points were accurately handled, and unfolded.*

*Scotus & ceteri Doctores ante concilia illa vixerunt, in quibus accuratius hæc omnia explicata sunt.*

*Bell. l. 1. r. de Pœn. c. 11.*

*Gabriel*



*Gabriel* agreeth with his Master *Scotus*, and for a final determination resolveth; *That the Apostles received it from Christ, and the Church from the Apostles in so secret a manner, as the Scripture maketh no words thereof at all.* A private conveyance perhaps sorted best with a private business. This *Schoolman* makes up an answer to that objection of *Scotus*, sc. *It cannot be a Church ordinance except the time, and place be shewed where the same was ordained*, roundly denying, that express mention of time and place is requisite to shew the Original of every Ecclesiastical constitution, and assureth us, that many traditions, and customes are received by the Catholicks as Church-Ordinances, wherein they are to seek for the *ubi*, and *quando* of their beginning. A Church-law then Confession might be in *Gabriels* opinion, though it be not extant where, and when it was introduced.

The *Seraphical Doctor* saith, *The Lord hath not instituted confession immediately and expressly; And the Arch-Bishop of Florence, Christ hath instituted confession tacitely, but the Apostles have published the same expressly.* Scarcely can these two sentences be pieced together; Christ hath not instituted immediately, saith one; that is, not in his own person *quæso*, but by his substitutes the Apostles; it was not instituted from them, but promulgated, saith the other, from whom then? *He insinuated Confession* (saith a third) and that secretly too, leaving the publication thereof for the Apostles; and if he have done so, The Apostles it seemeth were unmindful of *Christ's* charge, no where to publish a point, and Sacrament of such importance. One Apostle indeed saith of one Sacrament indeed; *That which I received of the Lord have I delivered unto you.* But of this matter no news, no syllable, a deep silence; yet the same Apostle averreth that

*Videtur finaliter discendum, quod preceptum de Confessione Sacramentali promulgatum est à Christo Apostolis, & per ipsos Apostolos promulgatum est Ecclesie verbo & facto sine omni Scriptura. Biel, l.4. dist. 17. Q. 1.*

*confessionem Dominus immediate & expresse non instituit. Bonav. l.4.d.17.n.72. Christus instituit confessionem tacite, Apostoli autem promulgaverunt expresse. Antennin, part 3.c.11. l.4.c.19. S. c. 2.*

*In hoc quod Ministris Sacramentorum Christus dedit potestatem ligandi & solvendi, insinuat, confessionem eis tanquam iudicibus fieri debere; sic ergo Christus confessionem instituit tacite, sed Apostoli promulgaverunt eam expresse. Comp. Theol. verit. l.6.c.25.*

I Cor. II 23.

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A&amp;S 20. 27.

he had declared unto them all the counsel of God; surely he was not of our Saviours counsel in this behalf. It is then true alike, The Apostles published this doctrine, and Christ instituted it.

Thus he Schoolmen stumble at the institution, but the Canons go down right to work; for the glory of that order *Parormitan* repeateth what others, and relateth what himself holdeth thus; Some say that confession

*Quidam dicunt quod fuit instituta in Paradiso figurativè, dum Deus indirectè compulit Adam ad confitendum peccatum. Alii quod sub lege, alii quod in novo Testamento figurativè, dum Christus dixit Leprosos quos sanaverat, Ita & ostendite vos Sacerdotibus. Alii quod ex autoritate Jacobi Apostoli dicentis, Confitemini alterutrum peccata vestra: sed Glossa ibi tenet, quod potius sit instituta ex quadam generali traditione Ecclesie, undè Græci non peccant non utendo confessione, confitentur enim soli Deo in secreto; quia apud eos non emanavit hæc constitutio, sicut in simili dicimus in incontinentia, nam non peccant eorum Sacerdotes utendo Matrimonio, quia Continentia est de jure positivo, & ipsi non admiscunt illam institutionem. — Multum mihi placet illa opinio, quia non est aliqua autoritas aperta, quæ innuat Deum, sive Christum apertè instituisse confessionem faciendam Sacerdoti; tamen cum sit generalis apud nos illa traditio, peccaret mortaliter Latinus non utendo hac confessione. Panorm. super. Decretal. 5. cap. Quod autem. c. Omnis utriusq. Sect. 18. extra. Glo.*

was instituted in Paradise in a figure, when God upon the by urged Adam to confess his sin: Others under the Law; and others figuratively in the New Testament, When Christ said unto the Lepers whom he healed, Go and shew your selves unto the Priests. Others from the authority of Saint James the Apostle saying, Confess your sins one to another. But the gloss upon that place holdeth, that it was rather instituted from a general tradition of the Church; hence it comes to pass that the Greeks sin not, in not using Confession, for they confess to God onely in secret; and because this institution hath not yet attained unto them; as we say in the like case of incontinency, that their Priests offend not in marrying, for single life is but a positive law, and they never admitted of that institution. — This Opinion pleaseth me much,

because there is not any clear authority, which intimateth that either God, or Christ did evidently ordain that Confession should be made unto a Priest. But at this present time since with us it is a tradition generally received; A member of the Latin Church should offend mortally in forbearing the use of this Confession. From which testimony we gather these gleanings: 1. That the ground of Confession is a general tradition of the Church. 2. That the Greek Church used not auricular Confession, nor had

had that institution reached (a) as yet unto them. 3. That single-life in the Clergy, and clancular confession, are observed in the *Latin Church* upon like grounds; viz the positive Laws of the Occidental Church. 4. That the obligation of single-life, and confession, are of force in the *Ponentine Churches* onely, where they have formerly been admitted. 5. That as the *Greek Priest* sinned not in contracting marriage, because *Cœlibate* in Priests is but *de jure positivo* onely; no more did the *Gracians* in not confessing, because the institution thereof is but *de jure positivo* only, and both restrained to particular Churches, and they remaining without the compass of those ordinances. 6. That a member of the *Latin Church* sinneth mortally in abstaining from Confession, because in that Church the general tradition therof hath been received. By all of which it appeareth that Canonical obedience was required only to Confession, as an useful constitution of the Church, and of such persons and places onely as had consented thereunto. The succeeding *Canonists* have failed by this compass: *All of them* (if credit may be given to impetuous *Maldonate*) following their first interpreter, say that confession was onely brought in by the law of the Church. And in truth the *Gloss* of *Semeca* upon *Gracians* decrees, and the handling of that gloss by the late *Roman Correctors*, clearly shew the wind to be in another corner with them than at *Rome*: for *John Semeca*, a Glossator upon *Gratian*, approving that opinion which settled Confession upon Church tradition, is checked by one *Frier Maurick*, appointed by *Pius V.* to oversee such Glosses, with this Marginal note. *Nay Confession was ordained by our Lord, and by Gods law is necessary to all that fall into mortal sin after Baptisme, as well Greeks as Latins.* The Council of *Trent* had said *Amen* to this, and *Anathema* to that opinion; therefore all Glosses, decrees, and determinations Theological, must be calculated according to that Latitude.

Then were the Canonists put to silence, but the *Divines*

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(a) Floruit Pat-  
nomican. An.  
Dom. 1440.

*Omnes Juris Pontificii periti secuti primum suum interpretem, dicunt, confessionem tantum esse introductam jure ecclesiastico. Maldon. disp. de Sacram. Tom. 2. c. 2. de Confess. orig.*

Gloss. de Pœ-  
nit. initio dist.  
5. in pœnitentia.

*Imò confessio est instituta à Domino, & est omnibus post Baptismum lapsis in mortale peccatum, tam Græcis quàm Latinis, jure divino necessaria. Rom. Correct. ib. in margin.*

keep a muttering still. *Persius Aiala* derives the lively expres-

*Quamvis Auricularis hæc confessio in lege veteri fuit adumbrata, per præcursorem Christi inter partes penitentiae commendata, & tempore Apostolorum etiam usitata, & tandem ab Jesu Christo Redemptore videatur esse instituta; tamen nuda, & clara huius Sacramentalis instituti ratio, quantum ad substantiam, & circumstantias ejus, divinâ traditione solum constat. Pers. confid. 3. de tradit. Auric. Confel.*

tion thereof from tradition; for how-  
ever (saith he) this confession might be shadowed forth in the old Law, might be commended by the fore-runner of Christ amongst the parts of Repentance, might be used by the Apostles, and at last seem to be instituted by Jesus Christ our Redeemer; yet the naked and evident reason of this Sacramental institution, in respect of the substance, and circumstances thereof, is only manifest from divine tradition.

His Country-man *Canus*, a Divine of some judgment, but more freedome than usually is amongst men detained in servitude, having sifted those texts vulgarly recited for this purpose; concludes of that in Saint James, Confess one to another, &c. & that other of Christ, shew your selves to the Priest, as of testimonies too weak to incounter Hereticks; and betakes himself to this last refuge; Although it may be easily said, that, let it be granted there is not extant any such command in holy Scripture, notwithstanding it is received from the tradi-

tion of Christ, and the Apostles, as many other doctrines of the nature of faith are. Add hereunto a Provincial Synod assembled at *Pertcrovia* in Poland, where the Fathers conclude thus;

From hence it may be collected, that Auricular confession was without doubt delivered from Christ by Word of mouth; the greatest part by far of whose sayings and doings were never committed unto any writing. In the opinion then of this Conventicle, Christ in-

stituted the same; but where and when tradition can best inform.

This want of Proof in Scripture, and Resolution in Divines, occasioned

*Alia quæ solent asserri, ut est illud Jacob. 5. Confitemini alterutrum, &c. & illud Luc. 17. non adeo firma videntur adversus Hereticos testimonia; tamen dici etiam facile poterat, quod licet ex sacra Scriptura hujusmodi præceptum non haberetur, habetur tamen ex traditione Christi & Apostolorum, quemadmodum alia pleraque naturæ fidei documenta. Canus, part. 5. Relect. de Pœnit. pag. 900.*

*Ex quo colligere licet, quod viva voce procul dubio fuit à Christo tradita; cujus multo maxima dictorum & factorum pars mandata Scripturis non est. Confel. Syn. Prov. Pertcr. habit. 1551. c. 47. de confel. p. 253. 2. edit. Dillingæ 1557.*

occasioned some in those times to be otherwise minded. The Waldenses of Provence and Daulphine, Anno 1535. amongst sundry other Articles of their Belief as had been taught unto them from Father to Son for many hundred years, sent to Oecolampadius, and Bucer, this seventh; *Auricular Confession is not commanded by God, and it is concluded according to the holy Scriptures that the true Confession of a Christian consisteth in the confessing of himself to one onely true God, to whom belongs honour and glory: There is another kind of confession when a man recencilieth himself unto his neighbour, whereof mention is made in the fifth of Saint Matthew; the third manner of confession is, When a man hath sinned publicly, and all men take notice of it, so he confess, and acknowledge his fault publicly.* Our Countrey-man John Wickliffe began openly to oppose Sacramental confession, affirming the same not to be founded upon the Scriptures, but to have been brought in onely by Papal institution: saith his Antagonist Tho. Walden, and not unlikely; for in that ridiculous pack of heresies amassed by the Council of Constance, and laid unto his charge, this we find for one; *If a man be duly contrite, all external confession is superfluous, and unprofitable.* And in a declaration of Walter Brut, containing divers positions by him asserted, Anno Dom. 1393. this is one; *this auricular confession is not prescribed in the Scripture.* Add unto these how in the Province of Tholouse, a certain People called *Boni homines*, (a branch of the Waldenses, if not the tree it self) being questioned by the Bishop of Lyons, *If every man ought to confess his sins unto the Priests, and Ministers of the Church, or else to a Lay-man, or to those of whom Saint James saith, confess your sins one to another: They answering said, for them that are sick, they may confess to whom they please; Of others they had nothing to say, be-*

History of Waldenses collected by I.P.P. L. p. 59, 60. edit. London, 1624.

*Cepit confessionem sacramentalem aperte oppugnare, asserens eam non in Scripturis fundari, sed ex sola institutione papali introductam fuisse.* Tho. Walden. Tom. 2. de Sac. cap. 135.

*Si homo fuerit debite contritus, omnis confessio exterior est sibi superflua & inutilis.* Conc. Const. Sess. 45. Error. Jo. Wickl. à Martino 5. damnat.

Arch-B. Abbot of visibility of the Church. p. 72. edit. Lond. 1624. An. Dom. 1175

*Interrogavit Episcopus— si deberet unusquisq. confiteri peccata sua Sacerdotibus & Ministris ecclesie, vel cuilibet laico, vel illis de quibus dixit Iac. Confitemini alterutrum, &c. Qui respondentes dixerunt, infirmis sufficere, si confitentur cui vellent, de infirmis vero dicere noluerunt, quia non dixit Iacobus nisi de infirmis. Quæsit etiam ab eis si sufficiebat sola cordis contritio, & non confessio; vel si erat necesse ut facerent penitentiam*

factionem post datam poenitentiam, ieiuniis, elemosinis, afflictionibus peccata sua lugueres, si suppetere eis facultas. Responderunt dicentes, quia Iacobus dicebat, Confitemini; alterumque peccata vestra, ut salverimini; & per hoc sciebant quod Apostolus aliud non precipiebat nisi ut confiterentur, & sic saluarentur, nec volebant meliores esse Apostolo ut aliquid de suo adjuungerent, sicut Episcopi faciunt. Rog. Hovedon. Annal. pars. post. Henrici Secundi R. p. 319. edit. London.

cause Saint James spake onely of infirm persons. The Bishop further demanded of them, if contrition of the heart, and confession of the mouth were sufficient, or if satisfaction after penance enjoined was necessary, in bewailing their sins in fasting, afflictions, and almes-deeds, if they were able. They answered saying, Saint James saith, Confess

your sins one to another, that you may be saved; and by this they perceived that the Apostle commanded nothing else, but that they should confess, and be saved; neither would they be better than the Apostle, as to add any thing of their own heads as Bishops do: So hath Roger Hovedon related that *tenet* in the process of their condemnation. Afterwards Anno Dom. 1479. there issued a commission from Rome to *Alphonsus Carillus*, Arch-Bishop of Toledo, authorizing him to assemble a Synod at Salamanca, and convent the Professor there, *Petrus Oxoniensis*, for teaching these conclusions;

Conclus. 1. Peccata mortalia, quantum ad culpam, & penam alterius seculi, delentur per solam cordis contritionem, sine ordine ad claves. Conclus. 2. Quod confessio de peccatis in specie, fuerit ex statuto aliquo universalis Ecclesie, non de iure divino. Conclus. 3. Quod prave cogitationes confiteri non debent, (Prelates latin) sed solâ displicentiâ delentur, sine ordine ad claves. Conclus. 4. Quod confessio non debet esse secreta. Canus, part. 6. Relect. de poenit. p. 899.

1. That mortal sins in respect of the offence, and punishment of the other world, are blotted out onely by the contrition of heart, without relation to the keys. 2. That confession of each particular sin was grounded upon some statute of the universal Church, and not upon divine right. 3. That evil thoughts ought not to be confessed, and are blotted out by a dislike, and displeasure thereof, without reference unto the

keys. 4. That confession ought not to be held in secret: All of which were condemned at that meeting, and that condemnation ratified at Rome, and that Ratification inserted for the worth thereof, into the *Extravagants*, by Sixtus IV.

This opinion then could no sooner peep out, but it was cut off by such as in those ages struck the stroke. It remaineth now that we examine the grounds of such Censures, and condemnations. Some of the *Theologues* that stand for divine institution,



stitution, alleage *Christ's* direction to the Lepers, *Go shew your selves unto the Priests*: I say some, not all; for the more judicious have laid aside this leaden weapon. But that some which gape more after the froth of *allegories*, than the clearer streames of the literal and genuine sense, have somewhat esteemed thereof, as *Haymo*; for that

not onely sins must be confessed to the Priest, but moreover that by their advice penance, and satisfaction of pardon must be obtained; it was well said, *Go shew your selves unto the Priests, for unto the Priests instead of God are sins to be opened. and penance at their discretion to be imposed.* And a little after; *The man that hath the le-*

*prosie of sin in his soul, ought to resort unto the Priest, and humbly make confession of his sins.* Thus *Haymo* hath laid a weak load upon a weak back; yet such is the weakness of our *Rhemists* judgments, that they think it worthy to furnish an Annotation, and in good sadness tell us, that by *leprosie* is meant *sin*, to be healed by the Ministry of the Priests; and by *showing*, *Confession*, and to that purpose quote a book of Saint *Austins* as truly his, as their note is unto the text. Such allusions may serve to stuff a Postill, but not to back an argument, as a French-man cries

out upon his Auditory, *Shew your consciences (good people) unto your Priests, and declare your sins unto them, if you will be healed.* However the Pulpit may flourish with such Clerk-like collations, the Polemical writers are squemish therein. The Cardinal likes the allegory, but not the pillar that sustaines it; for we do not affirm (saith he) that the Lepers were dispatched by *Christ* unto the Priests, to confess their sins unto them; but as in the old Law the leprosie of the body was of Priestly cognizance, so in the new, *Spiritual-leprosie* is to be ta-

*Quia non solum Sacerdotibus peccata sua confiteri debent, sed etiam secundum eorum consilium, penitentiam, & satisfactionem venie suscipere, rectè dicitur, Ite, ostendite, &c. vice enim Dei peccata Sacerdotibus pandenda sunt, & juxta illorum consilium penitentia agendi. Qui ergo habet lepram peccati in animi, debet venire ad Sacerdotem, & ei humiliter peccata confiteri.* Haym. Domin. 14. post. pentecost. p. 401.

Rhemists An-  
not. in Luke.  
17. 14.

*Moufrez vos Consciences aux Prestres, & leur declarez vos Pechez, si en voulez estre guarentis.* Sermon pour le 14. Dimanche apres la Pentecost. A Royen chez. D. Lau-  
det. 1634.

the allegory, but not

*Neque nos dicimus missos leprosus à Christo ad Sacerdotes, ut illis peccata sua confiterentur; sed ut in lege veteri cognitio lepræ corporalis, ita in nova, cognitio lepræ spiritualis ad Sacerdotes pertinet.* Bellar. lib. 3. de poen. c. 3.

ken.

Mittit Christus, ne calumniarentur Sacerdotes, Calv. Nō repudiavit penitus Christus Judæorum presbyterium, cum de lepro dijudicatione ageretur, Offende te (inquies) Sacerdoti. Beza de Presb. & excom. p. 17.

about to break the Law.

of the diseased were sent to Christ, *Lyra* gives two reasons;

1. *Quia Sacerdotes debebant indicare num talis esset verè curatus.* 2. *Quia pro sua emendatione tenebatur offerre sacrificium determinatum in lege.* *Lyr. in Luc. 17.*

*fice appointed under the Law*; upon other errands than they were sent, and not to confess their sins. Remitted then they were unto the Priests for trial, and examination, not for any acknowledgment; not to confess they were Lepers, but to make it apparent to the Priests first, and by the Priests to the people, that they were healed from their Lepry, and freed from the

ken notice of by our Priests likewise. Why then did Christ find them? thou wilt say, To shew the respect he bare unto *Levi's* order, and to remove that scandal, as if he went

And why the Lepers above all others

1. *That the Priests might testifie if they were thoroughly healed*; and so against their wills be witnesses of the Lepers curation, and Christs miracle.

2. *To offer for their healing the sacri-*

*fice appointed under the Law*; upon other errands than they were sent, and not to confess their sins. Remitted then they were unto the Priests for trial, and examination, not for any acknowledgment; not to confess they were Lepers, but to make it apparent to the Priests first, and by the Priests to the people, that they were healed from their Lepry, and freed from the

danger of infecting; *It bring the Priests office to try such men, and they to undergo the censure.* How impertinent then is it to infer a Divine institution from a politick ordinance? and to make a Law of State to become a typical ceremony? especially where the manner and end are so different; for in Auricular Confession the *sin* is acknowledged, here the *benefit*; the act there is *private*, here *publick*; there the spiritual leproy is revealed,

that it may be cured, here after the cure, that it may be censured; there that the Confessed sinner might be restored to the faithful society, here that the convicted leper might be exiled; there exposed as an example of devotion, here expelled upon danger of infection; there penitents make their resort to receive the benefit, and here the lepers to be thankful for the benefit received. This shewing therefore unto the Priests, shews no such matter as Auricular Confession to be of Divine right and institution.

We

οἱ ἱερεῖς ἐδοκίμαζον τὴν τοιούτων καὶ πρὸς ἐκείνους τὴν ψῆφον ἐδέχοντο. *Theophylact in Luc. 17.*

Importuna est illorum allegoria qui legem merè politicam inter ceremonias reponunt. Calvin.

Siste te summo Sacerdoti, de publico cœtu intelligendus est; ut præteream fieri id solitum magis ad publicam gratiarum actionem, vel ad partē sanitatis, aut alterius cujuspiam beneficii iudicium. Iac. Rex Med. in Orat. Dom. p. 63. lat. edit.

We must then see better cards: Their best plea is from the words of Christ; *Receive the holy Ghost: whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained.* Words of a pregnant sense in the Church of Rome, as to bring forth at one venter twins, two Sacraments of Penance and of Order. That Christ therein conferred a power to the Apostles, and their successors over sins, is a clearer truth than may well be denied; but whether such a power over consciences as is exercised in that Church, must now be questioned. The power it self in remitting and retaining sins, we must adjourn to its proper place, and must for the present examine whether the words of *Christ*, in themselves considered, or by necessary consequent prove auricular confession to be of divine right and institution. The *Roman* Divines insist upon the latter, and endeavour by necessary consequent to infer the same thus; Such as have fallen into sin after Baptisme, are bound by Gods law to repent thereof, and seek to be reconciled unto him, but none can be truly penitent: or reconciled unto God without confession of sin unto the Priest; which assumption they further confirm thus; *Christ hath instituted the Priests judges upon earth with such power, as without their sentence, No sinner after his Baptisme can be reconciled: but no Judge can pass a sentence upon unknown sins, and secret sins cannot be known but by Confession of the party; therefore, they conclude, &c. from which discourse thus framed, arise in their opinion these two Consecratories; 1. That Priests are instituted by divine right to hear and determine of sins brought before them by Confession. 2. That sinners are enjoined by the same authority to appear at this Tribunal, and there to accuse themselves, that they may be absolved. And as God hath ordained and commanded Priests to hear Confessions, and to pardon sins; so by the same ordinance, and command,*

Ioh. 20.22,23

*Christus instituit Sacerdotes Judices super terram cum ea potestate, ut sine ipsorum sententia nemo post Baptismum lapsus reconciliari potest; sed nequeunt Sacerdotes judicare nisi peccata cognoscant.* Bellar. lib. 3. de penit. c. 2.

*Comme l'institution des Prestres est de droit divine pour confesser les Pecheurs, aussi est bien la confession des Pechez pour estre fait devant ses Juges; & comme Dieu les a ordonné & commandé aux Prestres d'ouir les confessions, & pardonner les pechez; aussi par la mesme ordonnance, & commandement, il est obligé les fideles, Penitens à leur decouvrir, & declarer leurs fautes.* D. Bess. Carefine, Tom. 2. p. 724.

*hath*

hath he obliged the believing Penitents to discover and declare their offences. No argument more cried up than this, and as common with *Romes profelytes*, as water in *Tiber*: and thou hast it (good Reader) as it is pressed by a *Jesuite* and a *Sorbonist*, who wou'd be thought to be the onely *Scribes* and *Pharisees* of *Papal* Divinity; and mayst observe how all the force hangs but upon the by, one wheel moving another, that if the least flaw happen in any one, the motion, that is, the conclusion ceaseth; Many consequences, but how put together, by what pins, and contignations, that's a secret.

Perfius Satyr.  
ult.

————depinge ubi sistam  
*Inventus* Cryssippe tui finitor aservi.

*Christus certe  
nihil horum di-  
cit in sententia  
illa, Joan. 20--  
de tali judica-  
rio processu nul-  
la syllaba ibi  
extat. Chem-  
nit. ex. part. 2.  
p. 178.*

For according to this induction, without Confession to a Priest no absolution, and without Priestly absolution no remission; and without remission from the Priest, no reconciliation with God. Or thus; No reconcilement betwixt God and a sinner, except his repentance be sincere; no Repentance is sincere till the Priest approve, and judge it to be so; no Priest can judge of the Sincerity of Repentance, without notice of the offence; and notice he cannot have without a sinners confession: Thus have you this argument up-staires and down-staires. And if all these inferences flow so naturally and necessarily from the text, how dull-sighted were the Ancient Doctors that could espy none of them. Let us tread this *Climax* *xxi* *πῶδας*; for if it appear that the Priest is not constituted a Judge in this case, then there will lie against him *exceptio fori*, and a sinner may demand, *Who hath made thee a judge over us?* Or if a Judge, yet not infallible, and is not sure alwayes to remit where God remitteth, and retain where he retaineth. Insomuch that then, and there lies an appeal from him to the Judge of all the world who will do right; also if many sins are brought before God in *prima instantia*, and pardoned by himself *ἀπὸ θς*, then all sins are not so necessarily to be spread before the Priest. Again, if God hath invested the Priest with judicial power to take cognizance of sins in this Court of Conscience; and hath laid no necessity upon sinners to resort thereunto with suit and service, but left

it

it to the liberty of each mans Conscience in submitting himself to the jurisdiction thereof. If (I say) these, or any of these be just exceptions, the nerves of this argument will be soon abated.

I will let the first alone, Whether the Priest be a Judge or no in the matter of Absolution; but take him for one, and that there is such a private Court of Conscience, wherein the sinner arraigns himself, and the Priest pronounceth sentence, yet the proceedings differ much from all Secular Tribunals, where earthly Judges must take notice of the fact in particular, and go according to Evidence; here because the Courts are kept in Gods name, to whom all things are known, and for that he cannot be deceived, but man may, a Priest may leave the knowledg of the sin to God, and yet take notice of the Sinners repentance, (so far as in him lyeth) and according to his apprehension grant him absolution. I cannot free this Subalter-nate Judg from being imposed upon; but dare confidently aver, the Sovereign Judge cannot be deluded. I say more-over, A Priest may think he hath proceeded right, according to the light he hath received, and yet be mistaken; for a sinner may put on the outside of Repentance to artificially, as to com-passe his absolution from his Confessors hands, but from the highest hand his further condemnation. And oftentimes a great Penitent may make so little shew, that the Priest may see no reason to acquit him, whom God seeth great cause to absolve. The cause then is many times not fully nor truly opened unto man, but unto God alwayes. *There is a difference* (saith

Chernicitius) *betwixt a judicial Tri-bunal, and the function of the Ministry of the Gospel; At the Judgment-seat accordingly as the cause is opened, be it good or bad, is judgment given; but the Ministry of the Gospel hath a com-mand of declaring and imparting a be-nefit from another, viz. remission of sinnes from Christ,— again, He that seeketh absolution, proposeth unto him-selfe these two, First, God, from Whom he craveth, and seeketh remission of*  
S

*Discrimen est inter judicium & functionem Ministerii Evangelii; in Judicio juxta causæ cognitionem pronuntiatur, prout bona vel mala est: Ministerium verò Evangelii munda-tum habet annunciandi & impartendi alicuius beneficium, Christi scilicet, ad remissionem Peccatorum, — qui petit absolutionem duo sibi proponit; 1. ipsum Deum, utpote à quo pe-tit & querit remissionem peccatorum, atque addo coram ipso totum cor suum effundit. 2. deinde proponit sibi Ministerium, cujus voce, seu Ministerio tanquam Legati, Nuntii, seu interpretis, Deus utitur ad impartiendam, & obsequandam absolutionem. Quando igitur de-sinnes,*

id est meum cognitum feci Deo, non necessaria est scrupulosa enumeratio coram Ministro, qui tantum dispensator est alieni beneficii. — Ut Minister intelligat eum qui absolutionem petit, doctrinam intelligere, peccata agnoscere, penitentiam agere, & in Christum credere; quæ cognitio haberi potest absque illa enumeratione, &c. Chemnit. Exam. part. 2. de Confess.

*scrupulous enumeration is not necessary before the Minister, who is only the dispenser of anothers favour; and then adviseth the Minister, that if he perceive the Penitent, who seeketh for absolution, to have a competent knowledge what sin is, and what repentance is, and what it is to believe on Christ, upon which notice he is warranted to give absolution. And much to the same purpose Canus;*

*Medicine locus est hic non iudicii Chrysost.*

*Illud comm. morandum est, huius iudicii sacramentalis finem non tam punitionem, & vindicationem iustitiæ esse, quam vindicationem salutarem; ex quo fit, ut licet in iudicio purè vindicatio exacta culparum cognitio requiratur, ut viz. tanta sit pœna, quantum quis per culpas meritus est; at in iudicio hoc Sacramentali non exigitur exacta cognitio peccatorum, sed qualis, & quanta necessaria est ad curationem, & salutem Penitentis; hæc enim huius iudicii finis est. Canus part. 6. Relect. de Pœnit. pag. 903.*

*so much only, which is necessary for the salvation of the penitent; for that is the scope of that judicatory proceeding. Wherein we note, 1. Confession of sin is so far forth required as may be for the Penitents salvation; 2. And again, that an exact confession of all sins is not requisite to the salvation of a Penitent; 3. And lastly, the ends aimed at in this Spiritual Court, are not the same with the terrestrial benches; for here the way is made for mercy, and there the work for justice; judgment is remembred there without mercy, and here mercy without judgment; thereupon an exact and curious search into the knowledge of all sins is not so necessary to this spiritual Judge, and so the first link in the chain is broken.*

But suppose a confession so exact, and an enumeration of sins so scrupulous as *Rome* willeth, were thought necessary, what

*sinnes, and therefore before him poureth out his whole heart, In the second place he proposeth unto himself the Ministry, by the Voice whereof, as from an Ambassador, Nuntio, or interpreter, God bestoweth and sealeth an absolution. When therefore I have made my case known unto God, a scrupulous enumeration is not necessary before the Minister, who is only the dispenser of anothers favour; and then adviseth the Minister, that if he perceive the Penitent, who seeketh for absolution, to have a competent knowledge what sin is, and what repentance is, and what it is to believe on Christ, upon which notice he is warranted to give absolution. And much to the same purpose Canus;*

*We must call to mind that the end of this sacramental judgment is not punishing, and the vindicating of justice, but the vindicating of salvation; whence it is, that although at that Tribunal which serveth only for infliction of punishment, there is required an exact knowledge of the offence, that the punishment may be squared according to the nature thereof; yet in this sacramental judgment a strict account of sins is not exacted, but such, and*



what if the Judge proceed not to sentence according to the right opening of the case? We make no question of the Judges authority, we suspect his sincerity, and there is great difference between authority to do a thing, and infallibility in the doing of it. Now his sentence is right, and ratified in heaven, when he proceeds according to evidence, but it is not infallibly certain, that he shall ever do so; and we cannot imagine any erroneous sentence to be confirmed above, *sine Cæli infamia*, without dishonouring the Supream Judge. And that sometimes the Priest is out, the *School* distinguishing of the *erring key*, confirmeth; for what need to distinguish of the *erring key*, if the key never erreth? therefore *Lyra* hedgeth him in, and tells him that his sentence is allowed of by God, *When the judgment of the Church is conformable to his*. Never any simple Priest hath been so arrogant as to assume this priviledge to be infallible, the claim whereof the *high-Priest* at *Rome* hath made his prerogative: but what will you say if the *Pope* hath erred, and that in this present business of absolution, and eke in his own case? Read this ensuing story, you that are devoted to his chair, and tell me how you like it. "Popes have power to make choice of their Confessor, of whom they please; and there was a *Pope* perceiving his life to draw to an end, that committed to a *Chaplain* of his own, Apostolical power to absolve with plenary authority as in the year of *Jubile*; By virtue whereof, after confession made, he received absolution, and so departed this life. Not many dayes after he appeared to his *Chaplain* with a heavy look, and in a mourning weed, and being demanded, If he was the late *Pope*, answered yea; also the *Chaplain* desiring to know why he was so dejected in countenance, and clothes; for that, quoth the *Pope*, I am adjudged to eternal death; Is it possible, replied the *Chaplain*, since upon thy confession thou receivedst the benefit of plenary absolution? it is even so, said the *Pope*, because the highest Judge would not ratifie that absolution. The *Relator* tells us, how by this apparition God would let us know, that if it be so in the green wood, and top of the Church, we should consider what may fall out in the dry and under branches thereof, where there is less authority; that

Hoc tamen intelligendum est, quando judicium ecclesie divino judicio conformatur.  
Lyr. in Ioan. c. 20.

Capellano suo auctoritatem Apostolicam contulit se absolvendi sub plenaria remissione, ut fieri solet in anno Jubileo.

Supremus iudex absolutionem illam ratam non habuit. Spec. Exempl. dist. 9. Sec. 30.

although God and the Pope have but one Confistory, yet they are not alwayes of one mind; and if *Christ* confirm not in heaven the sentence of his *Vicar* on earth, we may well doubt if every Sir *John's* absolution discharge us before God; and if the Popes keys may erre in his own case, we may suspect their integrity in other mens; and so we see the second link in this *Sorites* is feeble, and apt to be broken.

For all this, let it be granted that sins must be fully opened, before the Priest can proceed to Sentence; and that he could not proceed amiss in the sentence of absolution and pardon;

*Ille potest remitti peccata non ita intelligenda est data Sacerdotibus, quasi Deus se ea adicarit, & eam pro suis transfulerit in Sacerdotes, ita ut in absolutione non Deus, sed Sacerdos remittat peccata. Chemnit. Exam. part 2. p. 176.*

yet except God had made over the hearing of all sins unto his Priests, and reserved none to himself, as not minding to be troubled about any such matters, and had resolved neither to forgive the sin, nor give the audience, but to such onely as the

Priests have remitted, the argument would be the more impregnable. But if our God be contrary minded (as sure he is) having shut out no sins from his gracious audience, and is of so quick an ear, as to hear the very desires of our hearts; and so swift to mercy, as to prevent oral Confession with a pardon; how loosely doth this reason hang? The present *Greek Church* upon confidence hereof addresseth her self unto God for a pardon, even for those sins which upon some causes were left out

in Confession. Thus writeth their late Patriarch; *Whatsoever sins the Penitent for forgetfulness, or shamefastness doth leave unconfessed, we pray the merciful, and most pitiful God, that those also may be pardoned unto him; & we are persuaded that they shall receive a pardon of them from God; thus he. God then remitteth sins never*

Ὅσα ὃ δια λήθην ἢ αἰδέω ἀνεξομολόγητα ἔδωκεν, ἐυχόμεθα πρὸς ἐλεήμονι, καὶ παροικίῳ Θεῷ, καὶ ταῦτα συγχωρηθῆναι αὐτῷ, καὶ πεπαισμεθα ὅτι συγχωρησιν τῶν ἐκ Θεοῦ ληψαῶς. Hierem. Patr. Constant. ad Tabing. Resp. 1. s. II.

confessed to a Priest, and oftentimes retaineth sins that are confessed; for the Priests sentence is not alwayes agreeable with his, nor of the same latitude and extent; God remitting whomsoever the Priest assoileth, (if he proceed aright) and many

many more besides; and retaining whose sins soever he retaineth, and many millions besides. Thereupon *Scotus* observeth, that the words of this Commission are not precise, that is, whatsoever you remit, I remit also, and no more; and whatsoever you retain, I retain, and that onely: For that many more sins are retained by God over and above those which the Priest retaineth is evident; *The Priest*

*onely retaining such which are detected, in such a confession, whereof there are apparent signs, that it proceeds not from a penitent heart; in such cases where a sinner shall confess his sins and express no sorrow for the same, like those Qui peccant & publicant, sin and glory in their sin; wherein the*

Priest doth not absolve, that is, he retaineth, and reserves for future sorrow, or punishment. Now God retaineth those that draw nigh to himself and the Priest with their lips, but are far from both in their hearts; God, I say, retaineth these, and all those likewise that are not known to the Priest, if they be not repented of, to be punished in hell fire. So for the other member, *viz.* remission of sins: If more sins be retained by God than are by the Priests, it followeth that more sins are forgiven by God than are by Priests also; for be it far from us to think, that God shall be more *strict* than the Priest in retaining, and not more copious than the Priest in pardoning; or that God should exceed the Priest in detention of sins, and not in remission. No, no, God is rich in mercy, and though in mercy he so far remember justice as to retain more sins than Priests take notice of, yet his goodness is so great, as to forgive more than Priests are able to take notice of, or well understand. Therefore the *Commission* runnes in words affirmative, and not negative; as if the remission and retention of sinnes made by the *Apostles* were precisely equall, and of the same dimensions with the remission and retention of sinnes made by God, which the negative termes, if they had been added, had also comprised; for Christ doth not say by way of negation after this

*Illud verbum, Quorum retinueritis, &c. non est præcisum; non solum enim illa retenta sunt à Deo peccatori ad penam, quæ retenta sunt à Sacerdote, quia Sacerdos non retinet aliqua, nisi aliquo modo sibi accusata, sed signis indebitis penitentiae; & tamen illa quæ nullo modo sunt obfensa Sacerdoti, Deus retinet ad vindictam Gebennæ; Ergo nec istud verbum, Quorum remiseritis, &c. erit præcisum.*

Unde neutri affirmationi adjunxit negativam denotantem remissionem factam ab Apostolis; vel retentionem esse precisam respectu remissionis, & retentionis à Deo faciendæ. Scotus lib. 4. dist. 7.

this manner, *whose sinnes soever ye remit not, they are not remitted, and whose sinnes soever ye retain not, they are not retained*; for then the power in the hand of the Priest had been

adequate unto that of God himself, and all sins must necessarily have come through their hands to Absolution. But their power is as a lesser *sphere* wrapt in a greater; a *spark* onely of that celestially flame; or as the *crumbs* which fall from their *Masters Table*. For example, as every thing that standeth under the roof of an house, is under the cope of heaven, but not wwhatsoever is under the Sun, is included under that roof; so accordingly whatsoever the Priest remitteth according to Gods Word, God remitteth; but not convertibly, whatsoever God remitteth the Priest remitteth. There remaineth then forgiveness for sin in store, besides that which the Priest *ratione officii* bequeatheth. Therefore all sins are not restrained to Priestly remission, nor by consequence to Auricular Confession, as the onely means to come by absolution and pardon; and so the third link is broken.

4.

Last of all, let it be granted that the Apostles and their successors have power from hence to remit sins, not principally, but Ministerially, by way of arbitration; and that they cannot arbitrate in an unknown cause, and thereupon the matter which they are to decide, is to be made known unto them; and let that manifestation be granted to be confession, what will follow

from hence? No more in the judgment of *Scotus*, then, that this was a good and profitable ordinance, *instituted* by Christ, yet not *necessary* to be observed; for instance whereof, *Confirmation* and *extream Unction* (which go for Sacraments at Rome as well as *Penance*) both must be thought to be of divine institution, yet neither adjudged necessary, nor is there (saith this Schoolman) any precept urging the use thereof. So here

Ratio ista bene concludit quod Sacramentum penitentie est institutum à Christo tanquam utile & efficax; non tamen sequitur ex hoc, quod sit necessarium recipiendum, ut cadens sub præcepto; quia extrema unctio est instituta à Christo, & confirmationis Sacramentum, & tamen neutrum est simpliciter necessarium, nec est præceptum de isto vel isto recipiendum. Sicut quatuor Sacerdotes quorum quilibet habet auctoritatem absolvendi istum peccatorem, non tamen tenetur peccator se cuilibet submittere, sed illorum uni cui voluerit. Scot. Supr.

here *Arbitrators* are appointed in cases of conscience, but no express command for any to submit to that arbitration. *Pose le cas*, There are 4. Priests, with equal power of absolution, yet a Penitent being in place, is not tied to submit to any one, but to whom he please. Here is then a judgment-seat erected, a Judge set upon the Bench, with commission to hear and determine of all sins, and yet no sinners compelled to come in but such as please. It seemeth *Scotus* held the words of Christ to invest the Priest with the power of a Judge, and *Arbiter* in the case of sin, to him that voluntarily submitted to that *Tri-bunal*; but withall that the words command not sinners to consent, and subject themselves precisely to that jurisdiction. At *Casars judgment seat Paul stood, and ought to be judged*, here a sinner may stand if he please, and be judged if he please, and subject himself to that censure, but he oweth no necessary service thereunto: This seemeth to be this *Doctors* opinion, though I suppose the business dependeth not upon this uncertainty; but that there are some kind of sins, though not all, and some sort of sinners too, though not all, that not onely *may*, but *must* come in & be judged here, if they love the welfare of their souls, as we shall see hereafter. Let us now gather up the broken pieces of this Argument. 1. The *Priest* is to have notice of the sins of the *Penitent* before he can proceed to censure; that's true, but a general knowledge may sometimes suffice, without exaction at all times of particular *Items*. 2. The Priest is constituted a Judge in such cases; that peradventure is true, but then he is fallible, and often erring in judgment. 3. The Priest remitteth sins; that's true in a good sense; but God remitteth more properly, and more then he, and many more without him. 4. The Court of Conscience is up, the Judge enabled with authority, and is present at the Bench to hear; true, but liberty is left to Christians to resort, or not, to submit, or not, to that jurisdiction.

Thus this Master-proof hangs together like a rope of sand; for the matter it self, I suppose, great is the authority which Christ in this place hath put his Priests in, and to great purpose questionless, as in due time may appear; and great care is to be taken by such that depend upon them, how they frustrate

not the power of God, or rather their own souls of salvation ; for the Priests bear not this power in vaine. Nor may the *Spi-*

*Qui ex his cristas erigunt & tyrannidem quandam sibi vendicant, cur non meminertint eorum quæ mox præcesserint ? Erasmus. Hunc locum quidam non intelligentes, aliquid sumunt de supercilio Phariseorum, &c. Hieron. in Matth. 16.*

*ritual men* vainly imagin that they are in place, *cristas erigere, & aliquid sumere de supercilio Phariseorum*, as *Hierome* said of some, to become Pharisaically insolent, or tyrannical; nor are the people to dread the same, as an usurpation upon their

consciences ; but to be perswaded, that this power is conferred for their peace, this *Physick* for their diseases, and this *Ministry* for their reconciliation. Therefore when other Physick will not work, prove this ; when the peace of Conscience cannot otherwise be had, seek it here ; and when thy Reconciliation can no way else be made, use these *Arbiters* and *Mediators* : And although Christ hath not expressly charged thee

*Duo ista sibi mutuo respondent, ut ubi nulla est confessio, ibi nulla esse possit absolutio. Confess. Pertcrovix, p. 2 § 2. 2.*

to repair unto this Court, to lay open thy case before these Judges, and submit thy self unto their censure ; yet consider how God would

never constitute a Judge without a Circuit, nor erect a Court without a jurisdiction ; and bethink with thy self for thy good

all this was and is ordained. *He hath said, and commanded his Physicians to heal ; and hath not said unto the sick, Go ye to those Physicians and be healed ; for this he would have sup-*

*Dixit Medicis ut curarent, sed non dixit infirmis ut ad Medicos curandi causâ venirent, hoc enim quasi certum esse voluit, quod Agri libenter se Medicis curandos offerrent. Hugo.*

*posed for a certain and indubitate truth, that sick men will gladly offer themselves to Physicians to be cured.* Let an *Hospital* be once erected, and endowed with maintenance for poor impotent people, and you need not command, or compel them to come in ; great suit shall be made to the Founder and Overseers for admittance. The Priest sits, the Courts are open, the Medicines are prepared, the reconciling keys are in his hands, yet little or no attendance upon this Judge, no repair to this Physician, no submission to this Reconciler. To one that demanded why *Philosophers* repaired to *Rich mens* houses, and Rich men never to their Cells ; it was answered,

That



That *Philosophers* knew they had need of such men, but *Rich men* were ignorant what use might be made of *Philosophers*; for concerning spiritual diseases we esteem our selves so sound, or if we are diseased, our selves so skilful, as to need none of the Lords Physicians. I say no more, but that it were better we did not see so much, or saw better then we do. And thus much to this argument.

Another Reason is yet behind, to prove confession of divine institution, because it belongs unto the *Sacrament of Penance*. By which Sacrament the Popish writers understand not the inward *Contrition* of the heart, but an external sign, and expression thereof, and not every contrition so expressed; for *Reinick* published her sorrow in sack-cloth, and in ashes; but this Sacrament was not under the Law, but under the Gospel; nor every external expression under the Gospel, unless Priestly absolution be set thereunto. If a man would catechise those Rabbins in their own

*Pœnitentia signis externis declarata, cum verbo absolutionis est Sacramentum. Bellar. l. 1. de pœn. c. 8.*

Rudiments, it would appear how ridiculous it is to teach mans traditions for Gods precepts; for demand of them what is the outward sign in this Sacrament, or matter thereof; One will answer, the *sin confessed*; no faith the *Cardinal*, sin is not the matter whereof, but whereupon the Sacrament worketh. *Scorus* and *Ockam* make onely *absolution* to be essential therein; And they (saith he) must be born withal living before such Councils were called which handled the matter accurately. *Contrition*, *Confession* and *Satisfaction*, are not parts of *Repentance*, as it is a virtue, as it is a Sacrament, saith the *Master of the Schools*, and if *Repentance* as a virtue be the *Saint*, and as a Sacrament the *shrine* onely; let *Rome* keep the Sacrament without envy, so we retain the virtue. Yet the *Franciscans* assembled at *Trent*, disliked that the actions of the Penitent should be the material part of *Penance*, because the matter of the Sacrament is a sign applied by the Minister unto the Receiver, and never the actions of the receiver himself. The sign (saith *Gropperus*) is *absolution granted from the Priest*; the thing signified is the reconciliation of a true

*Peccatum non est materia ex qua, sed circa quam, Sacramentum operatur. cap. 15.*

*Contritio, confessio & satisfactio, non sunt partes pœnitentie ut virtus est, sed ut Sacramentum.*

*Lomb.*

*Materia est quiddam quod à Ministro applicatur Recipienti.*

*enti, non autem actus ipsius recipientis. Hist. Concil. Trid. p. 284. Signum Sacramenti pœnitentie est verbalis absolutio quam impendit Sacerdos. Res Sacramenti reconciliatio est vere pœnitentis & confitentis. Grop. de Sacr. Pœn. p. 107. Antw. 1556.*

T

Penitent

Neque Scortus  
satis aptè locu-  
tus, c. 16. Sect.  
deinde, Grop-  
perus non satis  
cavitè locutus.  
ib. Sect. Resp.

*Penitent that hath made his confession.* Not so, saith the *Cardinal*; *absolution* is not the sign, but the form thereof. I should weary my Reader with relating popish differences. Here *Bellar- mine* would part the fray, telling one Schoolman, he *speaks* not so fitly; another, not so advisedly; or else (as before) he lived before those *Councils* that went accurately to work. For our parts, I think we may promise, that when their strife is ended about the *institute*, we will become good Friends about the *Institution*. Of a certain thus much; Antiquity never knew Repentance by the proper name of Sacrament. *Dama- scene*, a late Father, and well-nigh born out of due time, upon

Περὶ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἀρχαίας τοῦ Κυ-  
ρίου μυστηρίων. Βιβλ. δ. 5.

Ἡ μὲν ἔν γένεσις δι' ὕδατος καὶ πνευ-  
ματός ἐστιν, οὐ μὴν ἡ τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσ-  
ματος; ἡ δὲ βρώσις ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς ζωῆς  
ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἐπειδὴ πνευ-  
μαλινὸς ἔστιν ἔσθ' ὁ Ἀδάμ, ἔδει καὶ τὴν  
γένεσιν πνευμαλινὴν εἶναι, ὁμοίως καὶ  
τὴν βρώσιν. *Damasc. de Orthodox.*  
*fide*, l. 4. c. 6. pag. 110, 111. *Grac.*  
*Verone* 1531.

purpose treating of the holy and un-  
defiled Sacraments of the Lord; (for  
that title doth that Chapter beare)  
mentioneth two Sacraments onely,  
*viz.* of our spiritual birth, and spiri-  
tual food; for our birth is of water, and  
of the Spirit. I speak this of holy Ba-  
ptisme; but our meat is the bread of  
life, our Lord Jesus Christ; for see-  
ing that this Adam is spiritual, it  
behoveth this birth, and in like manner  
this food, to be spiritual; and laies out  
the whole Chapter upon these two

onely. The rest of the Sacraments were not then *Orthodox* or  
*fidei*, else there would have appeared some foot-steps thereof,  
in that Father; and that Treatise, which so summeth up the  
necessary, and most important principles of Christianity.

It is time to draw to an end of this matter; Then in the name  
of God what is to be thought of this ordinance, to what head  
is confession to be referred? If the Question be of that con-  
fession as is now practised in the Church of Rome, the Brat for  
ought I know, must be fathered upon the Council of Lateran,

Council of  
Lateran.

Nec libera Concilia quæ sub Innocentio,  
Clemente, &c. nec quicquam definitum ab  
istis Quæ sub, nisi quod ab illis Qui super,  
præfinitum esset. Tort. Torti. p. 209.

under Innocent the III; then Coun-  
cels lost their freedom, when they  
were held under: no decree could pass  
by them which were under, with-  
out leave from those which were above.

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Neque Scortus  
satis apte locu-  
tus. c. 16. Sect.  
deinde. Grop-  
perus non satis  
cavete locutus.  
ib. Sect. Resp.

*Penitent that hath made his confession.* Not so, saith the *Cardinal*: *absolution* is not the sign, but the form thereof. I should weary my Reader with relating popish differences. Here *Billar- mine* would part the fray, telling one Schoolman, he *speaks* not so fitly; another, not so advisedly; or else (as before) he lived before those *Councils* that went accurately to work. For our parts, I think we may promise, that when their strife is ended about the *institute*, we will become good Friends about the *Institution*. Of a certain thus much; Antiquity never knew Repentance by the proper name of Sacrament. *Damascene*, a late Father, and well-nigh born out of due time, upon

Περὶ τῆς ἁγίας καὶ ἀρχαίας τῆς Κυ-  
αῖς μυστηρίων. Βιβλ. δ. 5.

Ἡ μὲν ὅν γέννησις δι' ὕδατος καὶ πνευ-  
ματος ὁδοῦται, φησὶ τὸ ἅγιον βαπτισ-  
μα; ἡ δὲ βρώσις ὁ ἀπὸ τῆς ζωῆς  
ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ἐπειδὴ πνευ-  
μαλινὴς ἔστιν ἐστὶ ὁ ἁδῶν, ἔδει καὶ τὴν  
γέννησιν πνευμαλινὴν εἶναι, ὁμοίως καὶ  
τὴν βρώσιν. *Damasc. de Orthodox.*  
*fide, l. 4. c. 6. pag. 110, 111. Græc.*  
*Verena 1531.*

purpose treating of the holy and un-  
defiled Sacraments of the Lord; (for  
that title doth that Chapter beare)  
mentioneth two Sacraments onely,  
viz. of our spiritual birth, and spiri-  
tual food; for our birth is of water, and  
of the Spirit. I speak this of holy Ba-  
ptisme; but our meat is the bread of  
life, our Lord Jesus Christ; for see-  
ing that this Adam is spiritual, it  
behoveth this birth, and in like manner  
this food, to be spiritual; and laies out  
the whole Chapter upon these two

onely. The rest of the Sacraments were not then *Orthodoxæ fidei*, else there would have appeared some foot-steps thereof, in that Father; and that Treatise, which so summeth up the necessary, and most important principles of Christianity.

It is time to draw to an end of this matter; Then in the name of God what is to be thought of this ordinance, to what head is confession to be referred? If the Question be of that confession as is now practised in the Church of *Rome*, the Brat for ought I know, must be fathered upon the *Council of Lateran*,

Council of  
Lateran.

Nec libera Concilia que sub Innocentio,  
Clemente, &c. nec quicquam definitum ab  
istis Quæ sub, nisi quod ab illis Qui super,  
presinitum esset. Tort, Torti. p. 209.

under *Innocent* the III; then Coun-  
cels lost their freedom, when they  
were held under: no decrees could pass  
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But if Repentance be considered as a work of Grace arising from Godly sorrow, whereby a man turnes from all his finnes to God, and obtaineth pardon; and so including confession as an evidence of inward sorrow, and a mean of reconciliation, such a Confession poured out before God, or unto God before his Priests, is of the same right and institution as Repentance is.

ἔταξε ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἡμετέροισιν  
 ἱατρὸν δόκιμον τὴν μετάνοιαν, *Just.*  
*Mart. Respon. Oribod. 2 97.* ἡ μετάνοια  
 τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἡ ἀμαρτημάτων ὡς δίκαιον  
 καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἔχει. *Id. Dialog. cont.*  
*Tryphon. Judaeum.*

The grace of God hath ordained in this world repentance to be the approved Physician for sinners, saith *Justin Martyr*. And again, God according to the riches of his mercy accepteth of him that is penitent for his finnes, as *just* and without sin. That thing then is of Divine Institution

which Gods grace hath ordained; and of divine power and efficacy, which makes a sinner accepted of God as a Righteous person. But all this (thou wilt say) may be done by contrition, and confession to God onely, without respect unto the Priest; I deny not but that it may be, and often is effected that way, but not alwaies; such may be the Condition of the sinner, and quality of the sin, that pardon, which is the fruit of Repentance is not gathered, and new obedience which is the fruit of the Penitent, is not brought forth, without confession to the Priest, and direction from him, and so to be comprised in this duty also; for if the doore of Heaven would ever open upon the former knocking, the Priest had keyes committed to no purpose. To make this to appeare distinctly,

*Juriscofultis, institvere est vel arbores, vel vineas in aliquo loco parere, ut in conducto fundo, si conductor sua opera aliquid necessario vel utiliter auxerit vel edificaverit, vel instituerit. l. Dominus. Sec. in conduct. ff. loc. & conduct. vide Turneb. Advers. l. 2. c. 13.*

we are to consider, that to institute may be taken in a twofold sense, first, to be the cause, producer, and author of an effect; so taken with the ancient *Civilians*, with whom to institute trees, or vineyards, is to set, and plant them, In a ground let out,

if the Farmer by his industry shall have improved it, have builded, or have set or planted, in the Digests. And in this acceptance Christ is the Author of the Sacrament of the Eucharist; that Vine is of his planting, and institution: he is the Author and

his



his Ministers to do it by his authority. Now Repentance is indeed a work of God, but not in God. Confession is when God openeth a *sinner's* mouth, not his *own*. in that sense Confession is not of divine institution. 2. Secondly that is said to be instituted that is commanded, and enjoined: so of institution divine; that is of divine law and ordinance, and that of divine law which is prescribed in the Divine word, the holy Scriptures, as a law to be observed or as an example to be imitated: And Divine ordinances are there delivered by God immediately, or by *Θεοπνευστοι*, the men of God, inspired by him. In which sense Saint *Chrysostom* interpreteth those passages of Saint *Paul*, not *I* but the *Lord*, and *I*, not the *the Lord*, not as if *Christ* spake of himself, and *Paul* from himself, for in *Paul* *Christ* spake: what is it then that he saith, *I*, and not *I*? *Jesus Christ* hath delivered some *Laws*, and

ordinances in his own person, unto us, and some by his *Apostles*. Furthermore, a thing may be of Divine right, as expressly and formally enjoined in the Scriptures, or else as virtually implied by a necessary deduction and consequence; or els as exemplary and ratified by the constant practice of the Church. So divine right and institution is accepted in a threefold sense, 1. in express precept and command. 2. in necessary consequence depending upon some other thing commanded. Or. 3ly. by approved examples in Gods

word, commended by the practice of the Church. We will lay confession unto all of these, and see what authority it hath. And first for *divine command*, we read in the law that the sinner by divine edict, brought his *Sacrifice*, and confessed his sin unto the *Priest*. Thou wilt reply, that law was *Ceremonial*, so say I in respect of the *Sacrifice*, but dare not say so, in respect of the confession, the one being a *typical* and the other a *moral* act, And think it not strange that one precept may be mixt, and composed of *Ceremony* and *morality*; For is not the law of the Sabbath so, the day *Ceremonial*, and the rest

τί ποτε ἂν ἐστὶ ὁ λόγος, ἐγὼ καὶ ἐγὼ; ὁ νόμος, καὶ τῶν δογματῶν τὰς μὲν δι' ἐαυτοῦ, τὰς δὲ διὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ Χριστός. *Chrysost.* περὶ παρθενίας κατ. 18. Το. 6. 250.

*Aliquid dicitur esse jure divino duobus modis; vel quod institutum habet in sacris literis, idque vel expresse, vel certa deductione evutum, vel ex mplym continuata ecclesie praxi omni seculo commendatum. Junius in Bellar. contr. 7. cap. 10.*

Confession of  
divine institution,  
1. *Veritate precepti.*

Numb. 5.  
Lev. 1. 5.

*De ceremoni-  
alis quies moralis.*

*cultus à natura,  
modus à lege,  
virtus à gratia.*

morall; and it may not unfily be applied to Confession, what is verifed of the *Sabbath. 1. Confessio Deo facta est a natura*; Nature it self teacheth us that a sinner must confesse unto God, whom he hath wronged; and this is *morale positivum*, the morall positive part of the law. 2. *Modus à lege*, To confesse unto the Priest. This manner of confession was injoynd by God, and this is

*Confessio mentalis quæ fit Deo, est de dictamine legis nature adjute quodammodo per fidem.*  
Raymund. sum. tract. 4.

*Positivum divinum*, the divine positive part of the law. 3. But *Virtus à gratia*, true confession whether to God, or to his Priest, is from the working of the holy spirit; it being fulfilled in this as in all other

*Jam donum Spiritus Sancti habet qui confitetur & poenitet, quia non potest esse confessio peccati, & compunctio in homine ex seipso.*  
Aug. in P. 1.

2.  
Ex necessitate  
Consequentie.

*thou hast not received?* The Ceremonial part which consisted in the Sacrifice, ceaseth; for a Christian hath another Altar, and another Sacrifice, Christ Jesus, slain upon the Crosse, by vertue whereof his Priests assure the Penitent of pardon, & absolution. For the second, Confession is of divine right by way of deduction. For if the use of the keys in the Ministry of the Priests be divine, (as it cannot be denied but that they are so) and if that use consisteth in absolution, and if that absolution ever presupposeth, and cannot be denounced without precedaneous confession; the consequent will tye them together, for the world cannot break the relation that is betwixt Confession and absolution. And for the last, a precedent we have in the Acts of the Apostles, seconded with the practice of the Church, as hath

3.  
Ratione exempli.

*Jus divinum laxè vel stricte sumptum hoc in S. literis invenitur, illud ex earum sive instituto, sive exemplis, & analogia, vel a ratione deducitur.* Azorius Instit. Mor. part. 2. l. 1. c. 2.

been declared. Thou seest (Good Reader) how confession pretendeth to divine right in a *strict sense*, as injoynd in the Scripture; and in a *large*, as a necessary consequent deducted by rational proportion from divine premisses; & how the same is corroborated by examples set forth in the Scripture, and by ecclesiastical practice, set forth in the discipline of the Church likewise.

This I must be interpreted to speak of Confession unto Gods Ministers in generall, without respect to the manner thereof, privately

privately or publickly performed. Which I think is left to the power of the Church to determine. There was a time when the publick performance thereof was all in all; that was left off, and the private doing thereof succeeded in the room, to supply that defect; and which at the first alteration was esteemed to be no more Sacramentall, or of no more necessity for obtaining remission of sinnes than the former. So that the course taken herein may well be thought to have the nature of a temporall law, which (as Saint *Austin* saith) *although it be just, yet in time may be justly changed.* Canus acknowledgeth confession in its own nature for a divine ordinance, but

*Appellemus istam legem (si placeat) temporalem, quæ quumvis iusta sit, commutari tamen per tempora iuste potest.* Aug. de lib. arb. lib. 1. cap. 6.

for the Condition thereof, secret or open, he referreth to be ordered by naturall prudence; his words are these: *Confession*

*of sinnes ought to be made unto the Priest, not onely by tradition from our Ancestors, but also by testimony from the Gospel; and this is of the necessity of the Sacrament. But whether Confession should be secret, or publick, that's left to natural prudence, which wil- leth that secret sinnes should be judged*

*Confessio peccatorum Sacerdoti fieri debet, non solum ex traditione majorum, verum etiam ex Evangelico testimonio, quod quidem est de necessitate Sacramenti: Secretam vero aut publicam confessionem fieri, prudentiæ est naturalis relictum, quæ dicat ut occultæ occultè, & publica publicè judicentur.* Canus, Relect. de. pæn. p. 6.

*in secret, and those which are publick, publickly, Michael Vehe frameth to himself this objection; Let it be granted that these words, whose sinnes soever ye remis &c. infer a confession to be made of all sinnes whatsoever; which seeing it may be performed two waies, privately, or publickly, and neither way by Christ commanded, both would seeme of equall necessity. But no man can say that publick confession is necessary, and why may not so much be said of private? answereth thus. We say and affirm neither Way of Confession to be necessary by any precept from Christ, and yet both necessary with a distinction: The Church then was left to her choise to take which she pleased, and seeing she hath embraced to confess in secret, we are not tyed to the publick:*

*Respondemus & dicimus, neutrum constendi modum esse ex præcepto Christi necessarium; utrumque autem necessarium sub distinctione; liberum est ergo ecclesiæ eligere illum, vel illum; cum autem etiam secretam voluerit esse confessionem, ad publicam non tenemur. Vehe. tract. 6. de Sacr. Pæn. c. 4.*

• Which

Which two assertions how far they cut the throat of Clannical confession, *Rome* may doe well to consider. Confession then in it self may be of Divine right, and the manner thereof, whether private or publick, a Churches constitution; and which way the Church should conceive to be most profitable, and command the use, what am I that should contradict the same? to whose benigne censure I submit what I have here resolved concerning the institution.

## S E C T. II.

## The Contents.

*The abusive necessity of Confession.* Tyrannicall inquisition into mens consciences, distastfull. Confession left at liberty in Gratian's times. Schoolmen leaning to the necessity thereof. Confession not the only necessary means for absolution, and remission. The ends aimed at in Popish confession, unnecessary. No expresse precept in Scripture for the absolute necessity thereof. Confession an heavy burden upon fleshly shoulders. Private confession not practised from the beginning. Established in the place of the Publick by an edict from Leo 1. The fact of Nestarius abrogating confession, with the severall answers and expositions of Roman Writers expended. Confession deserted in the Greek Church. Divers kinds and formes of Necessity. Confession in what cases necessary, and the Necessity thereof determined.

**W**E are now come to the necessity of confessing; a point necessarily to be opened, the overpressing of the same upon mens Consciences hath been thought a kind of Tyranny and hath caused the busie obtruders thereof to be suspected, as if they aimed at their own ends, and sought not those things that are of  
Christ

Christ Jesus, Lording it over the Consciences of the people, making their *keyes* become *pick-locks*, and themselves not *Seers*, but *Spies*; not Judges, but Accusers; not Physicians, but Betrayers; not good *Samaritans*, to bind up the wounds, but cruel Tyrants to rent them wider. More than time it is to consider of these things, and to discharge the duty it self of such abuses. And from our endeavours herein hath sprung the controversy between Rome and us, viz. our dislike of such a commanding necessity as shall lay violent hands upon a sinner, and urge him to this Physick against his will; where oftentimes the *Purge* becomes more violent than the *disease*, and the *poison* more bitter than the *grief* it self. The profit, and great good reaped by Confession we willingly subscribe unto, but confession upon the rack is that we dislike.

It is not called into question (saith a Roman Doctor, but no Tridentine) whether confession be beneficial and whole some (for our adversaries grant this of their own accord;) but the controverted point is, whether the number of sins in confession be necessary by Gods law or not. The Trent Fathers decree the same to be a matter of necessity, laid upon the necks of all sinners; and plant their sixt Canon, to discharge Anathema's against all such as shall deny the institution of confession, and the necessity thereof from divine right, for the obtaining of salvation. Many moderate Divines of Germany, as Chemnitius witnesseth, endeavoured pacification herein, as desirous to lenise and mitigate the severity of this Papal practice with gentle Medicines; but that merciless council ratified and enjoined bitter pills, and sharp receipts, very corrosive upon the Consciences of men, as apparently necessary for the health of their souls. And observes the progresse, and proceeding, how Con-

Non versatur in questione, num utilis & salutaris sit confessio (nam Adversarii hoc ultro donant) sed hoc in contentionem rapitur, An enumeratio delictorum in confessione sit de jure divino necessaria? M. Vhe tract, de secreto Confess. c. i. Lyphæ, 1535.

Si quis negaverit confessionem Sacramentalem vel institutam, vel ad salutem esse necessariam jure divino, &c. Anathema sit. Con. Trid. cap. 5. can. 6.

Conati fuerunt multi Pontificii scriptores, in Germania præsertim, acerbitatem legis Pontificiæ de confessione variis phar macis mitigare; sed concilium sine misericordia durissimas condiciones Pontificiæ confessionis renovat, confirmat, & stabilis. Chem. Exam. part. 2. p. 195.

session came by those necessary ties. In the Primitive Church it was used as a profitable, and wholesome discipline, and did much good in restraining from sin, and in pacifying the conscience after sin; full and frequent are the passages in the volumes of the

*Apud Patres extant exhortationes ad confessionem disciplinæ gratiâ. — Gratiani & Lombardi tempore captum fuit d. sputari, An necessaria fuit confessio: Gratianus Lectori liberum permittit Judicium; Longobardus inclinât ad necessitat. m. Chemnit. ib. p. 198.*

*Fathers* looking this way, and commending the same to our Christian care; but in their dayes it was but *exhortative*, not *compulsatory*. After their dayes in *Gratians* time the necessity thereof came to be disputed, yet so, as nothing peremptorily

was then resolved. The *Master of the sentences* seemed to incline and draw to that opinion which held the same to be necessary; and that which in his time was but probable, and which might piously be embraced, began at length to be entertained as certain, and firmly to be believed. And so now a necessity is laid upon us with a *woe* and an *Anathema*, if we come not to confession. It is very true what he spake of those two, the *Castor* and *Pollux* of *Canonical* and *School-Divinity*; for *Gratian* reciteth at large the several sentences of the *Doctors*, and at length leaves the matter wholly in suspense,

Δίσσ.  
xxcxi  
Lombard.  
Gratian.

*Quibus auctoritatibus, vel quibus rationum firmamentis utraque sententia innitatur, in medium breviter expōitū. Cui autem potius adherendum sit, Lectoris judicio reservatur; utraque enim auctores habet sapientes & religiosos viros. De Iœn. dist. 1. c. 89. Quamvis.*

after this manner; *Upon what authorities, or upon what strength of reasons both these opinions are grounded, I have briefly laid open; but to whether of them we should adhere, is reserved to the judgment of the Reader; for both of them have for their Favourers wise and religious men.* The

Scales it seems hung so even that he durst not turn them to either side, and so the business rested in suspense, and undecided in his time, which was M C L. years after Christ; and all that while Christianity stood without this decision. *Peter Lombard* hangs something upon one scale, who proposing these questions; 1. Whether sin is remitted upon contrition of the heart onely? 2. Whether confession unto God sufficeth without any unto the Priest? 3. And whether confession may be made



made to a faithful Lay man? Of which, learned men (saith he) are found to hold diversly, and concerning them the Doctors seem to have delivered diverse resolutions. But his resolution is thus framed; It may be said that sins are remitted upon contrition, and humility of the heart, without oral confession, and performance of external punishment. And that such testimonies of the Doctors as import confession, are to be understood of the inward Confession of the heart; or else touch those as neglect and contemn confession, which is made unto the Priest. But he addeth withall, that a Penitent ought to confess if he have time; yet before confession be in the mouth, if there be a resolution thereof in the heart, that a man is forgiven.

But afterwards he grows more peremptory; From these and more proofs then these it appeareth without all doubt, that confession ought to be tendered unto God first, thence to the Priest, (if he may be had) otherwise there can be no possibility of coming into Paradise. This Magisterial determination hath these parcels: 1. sin is remitted upon inward confession; 2. a purpose of Confession is required for the remission of sin; 3. the neglect or contempt of Confession either to God, or the Priest, is damnable; 4. Confession of sin (if opportunity serve) is actually to be made unto God, and the Priest, upon peril of exclusion from Gods kingdom. Thus the Master; and we cannot expect better from the disciples, for usually they are more forward, and say more than those that taught them: and especially seeing the Council of Trent hath had so little compassion in this case; we are out of hope that any Divines of that side should abate any thing of this decreed rigour.

It remaineth that we examine the grounds why this extreme necessity is imposed; for Laws and ordinances are not usually

*In his docti diversa sentire inveniuntur, quia sicut his varia, ac penè diversa tradidisse videntur Doctores. l. 4. d. 17. c. c. i.*

yea and almost adverse

*Dici pot. st quid sine confessione oris, & solutione poenæ exterioris, peccata delentur per contritionem, & humilitatem cordis. — Quæ dicta sunt de confessione, & Penitentia, vel ad confessionem cordis, vel ad interiorem poenam referenda sunt, & ad contemnentes, vel negligentes referenda.*

*Oportet penitentem (si tempus habeat) confiteri; & tamen antequam sit confessio in ore, si votum sit in corde, præstatur ei remissio.*

*Oportet Deo primùm, & deinde Sacerdoti offerri confessionem, nec aliter posse pervenire ad ingressum Paradisi. Id. ib.*

enacted, nor necessarily exacted, except upon sound purposes and ends. And if those ends may be obtained without them, or come by upon better termes, or if the goodness thereof be ended; the Laws are repealed, the ordinances taken away, and the necessity ceaseth; this being a received *Maxim*, that the necessity of the *means* must not exceed, nor be above the necessity of the *end*; and if the *end* be not judged necessary, the like judgment must be had of the *means*. Again, such *means* are onely deemed necessary, which serve for the attaining of the *end*; and so far forth as without them such a proposed *end* cannot be accomplished. For example; If eating and drinking be onely necessary for this life, then if I had no necessity to live, I might have no necessity to eat. Again, If I am to go a journey, it is not necessary that I shall go afoot, because I may be carried: two things then constitute the necessity of the *mean*, *aptitude*, and *propriety*; that it be *fit*, and *onely* fit to compass such a design. These notions presupposed, we shall inquire into the foundations of this necessity in exacting confession; and if neither the *end* be necessary to be had, nor the *means* so requisite for the due obtaining thereof, we shall then cast away this necessity as an exaction, it being a burden not to be endured, which is sustained to no purpose; and a tyrannie which laies a necessity upon the conscience, where Christian liberty is every way as behoofeful.

The first ground of this imposition is upon a supposed perill of salvation; for these men teach that as there is no reconciliation with God without remission of sin, so no sin is remitted without confession (or at least a purpose thereof) unto a Priest;

for saith Bellarmine, *A necessary mean to reconcilement after Baptisme, is Confession of all sins made unto a Priest*: And hence it is they

*Medium necessarium ad reconciliationem post baptismum est confessio peccatorum omnium Sacerdoti facta. Lib. 3. de poenit. cap. 2.*

Confession to a Priest not necessary in all cases, and to all persons, *necessitate medii.*

urge it so closely; and too urgent they cannot be, if so great a matter were at stake. But the question is, whether the *mean* proposed be necessary to this end, yea or no; and whether remission of sins can be obtained of God no other way? for if it may, then we must conclude this not to be an adequate *mean* conducing thereunto; for we must now consider of Con-

*fession*

cession not as an *help*, and a kind of mean, and in some sort of sinners onely; but whether or no it be the *onely mean*, for all sinners to gain a pardon: for there can be no necessity for a *Felon* to use the mediation of one man onely to his Prince for pardon, except the Prince be resolute to pardon no other way. Now God hath not any where revealed so much, that no mercy shall be had but upon such a condition; nor dare the *Jesuites* confine him unto any such. *Christ the Author of the Sacraments*, depended not upon his Sacrament, and therefore did remit sins, sometimes not onely without Confession, but without Baptisme also, saith *Bellarmino*. Yea in the ordinary course remission of the sin comes in betwixt contrition of the heart, and confession of the mouth. *Saint Augustine* upon these words, *At what time soever a sinner shall be converted, & ingenuerit, and shall groan, he shall live, and not die*, writeth thus; *It is not said, and shall confess with his mouth, but being converted shall groan; from whence is given to understand, that sometimes we obtain a pardon when our lips are shut; hence it was that those Lepers whom the Lord commanded to shew themselves unto the Priests, in the way were healed before they came unto them. And as Lazarus was first raised by the Lord, and loosed from the power of death before he came forth of his grave; so a sinner is first raised by Grace, and loosed from the bonds of sin and guilt, before he can come forth to Confession. This order the Master observes, 1. Nemo suscitatur nisi qui à peccato solvitur; None can be raised but must be loosed first from Death, because sin is the death of the soul; and this solution is absolution. 2. Nullus confitetur nisi resuscitatus; for as speech is the argument of life, so confession of grace: and, in morte quis confitebitur tibi? In death there is no remembrance of thee, Psal. 6. 5.*

*Christus author Sacramentorum, à Sacramentis suis non dependebat; & ideo non modò sine confessione, sed etiam sine Baptismo peccata interdum remittebat. Lib. 3. de pœn. c. 17.*

*Non dicitur, Ore confessus fuerit, sed conversus ingenuerit; unde datur intelligi quòd etiam ore tacente veniam interdum consequimur: hinc & Leprosi illi quibus Dominus præcepit, ut ostenderent se Sacerdotibus, in itinere antequam ad Sacerdotes venirent, mundati sunt. Aug. apud Magistr. lib. 4. d. 17. Sec. 1.*

*Lazarus etiam non prius de monumento eductus, & postea à Domino suscitatus, sed intus suscitatus prodiiit foras vivus, ut ostenderetur suscitata anime præcedere confessionem. Lombard.*

בשואל מי  
יורה לך  
and.

and in the grave who shall confess unto thee? Now the mean in execution ever precedes the end: Confession then is not the means to purchase remission, which goes before it; therefore

Gabriel dislikes this course, and tels us, *That many, and in a diverse manner, have gone about to shew the necessity of actual confession, but for the most part very insufficiently; and truly it cannot sufficiently be demonstrated from the necessity of remission of sin, although remission of sin be necessary to Salvation; for that there is another mean sufficient to come by forgiveness of sin without actual confession, namely, contrition of heart; whereupon the sin is forgiven before the sinner can confess unto the Priest. And for that confession*

*Confessio quid sit necessaria in actu, variis modis ostendere nituntur, sed plerique insufficienter; & quid non potest ostendi sufficienter ex necessitate remissionis peccati, quumvis remissio peccati sit necessaria ad salutem; tum quia ad remissionem peccati est alius modus sufficiens sine confessione in actu, scilicet contritio cordis, per quam peccatum remittitur, priusquam Peccator Sacerdoti confiteatur, tum quia confessio secundum probabiliorum opinionem preexigit remissionem peccati per contritionem priusquam, & per hoc, nunquam per confessionem remittitur peccatum, sed eam presupponit. Biel. l. 4. d. 17. Qu. 1.*

*prerequireth forgiveness of sin (according to the more probable opinion) by an antecedent sorrow; and by reason whereof sin is never forgiven by confession, but is presupposed by it. Thou wilt reply, how Biel speaketh of actual confession, and not of potential; or the purpose, and resolution in the heart to confess, which is ever concomitant with contrition. I answer, Holy vows and purposes not reduced into act, are in themselves of no worth, but in case where they shall earnestly be endeavoured to be put in act, and to be effected; but (the ability being wanting, or disappointed by some greater power) then they are taken for the deed; and a faithful promise of confession is as good as confession it self. Here when a Priest is at hand there needs no such vow or purpose, there being no likelihood the same should be crossed or intercepted; this actual confession then supposeth none that is promissory. I desire therefore this popish block may no more be cast in the way.*

2. *Necessitas Finis;* Ends prescribed in popish thirfe unnecessary.

Other ends then may be excogitated, and for them confession may be thought a necessary mean; for sure the shoe will not fit this foot; the Question is indeed, and upon this occasion proposed by the *Master of the Sentences.* *If it be demanded why*

why Confession should be necessary, since the sin already is blotted out by Contrition? In answering to that demand he flies to other ends: 1. *As to inform the Priest of the nature of the offence, and what he is to judge thereof;*

but there can be no great end of that information when the sin is cancelled; for why should another man remember, when God hath forgotten it? 2. *And to make the sinner more humble, and more cautious.* Conduce it may somewhat this way, but there are better texts for those themes, and auricular Confession left out; some inducements these, but no necessary prescriptions. Furthermore, saith Gabriel;

*If we will narrowly and circumspectly listen unto the virtue of Confession, it was not instituted (at least in act) as necessary for the forgiveness of sin, but that it supposeth; but it was ordained for three other purposes; 1. that the sinner might appear unto the Church to be absolved; 2. That a certain satisfaction might be imposed by the Confessor, whereby the punishment of sin may be taken off; 3. and that a part of the punishment might be remitted by Priestly absolution.* Grave considerations and weighty sure, but the scales must then hang at Rome to weigh them in, else with us on this side of the Alps, they will be found lighter than vanity it self; and in Biel's own judgment, imposition of penance, the second reason, is not so necessary to a discreet Penitent that can allot himself a just portion for his sin:

yea, absolution (saith he) may be enjoined without any imposition of penance at all, (as he saith) if the Penitent will run the hazard of Purgatory, and not make payment here, but defer till then, where the utmost pardon shall be exacted. And in truth, prescription of penance is the principal mark aimed at in Popish shrift, and satisfaction the choicest employment; where Penitents are taught more to rely

*Ad quid confessio necessaria, cum in contritione jam deletum sit peccatum? Resp. 1. per confessionem intelligit Sacerdos qualiter debeat judicare de crimine — 2. per eam peccator fit humilior & cautior. Lomb. l. 4. dist. 17. Sect. ult.*

*Si suaditis attendimus virtutem Confessionis, ipsa non est instituta (saltem in actu) tanquam necessaria remissionis peccatorum, sed hanc presupponit; sed propter tria instituta est: 1. sc. ut Peccator innotescat Ecclesie tanquam absolutus; 2. ut certa satisfactio, per quam poena peccati tollitur, a Confessore imponitur; 3. ut poene pars virtute Sacramentalis absolutionis remittatur. Gab. Biel. ib.*

*Non videtur necessarium, praesertim ubi confitens non indiget informatione — poenae hic non solvitur, solvitur in futuro; ficitur quoque tales salvi, sed non nisi per ignem. Gab. ib.*

rely upon that reed and arm of flesh, than upon *him* that dyed upon the *Cross*. Like the Ambassadors of *Ptolomæus* and

*Plus eos S. P. Q. R. quàm parentibus ejus, quàm Diis immortalibus debere, per quos obsidione miserimâ liberati essent, regnum propè amissum receperant.* Tit. Livius lib. 45. Sect. 13.

*Cleopatra*, who acknowledged in their Masters name, that their *Coun- trey* was more bound to the Senate and people of Rome, for their deliverance from a miserable siege, and for the re- stitution of their kingdome in danger to

be lost, than to their own dear Parents, yea, than to the immor- tal Gods. Let I say their actions be scanned, and their intenti- ons thereby discerned, and when these ends are resolved to be necessary, let confession be decreed to be so also.

3. Necessitas  
Præcepti.

But what say you to the third necessity, which is of *Precept* and Command? Indeed Divine precepts should not be question- ed but observed; Let there be shewed any *mandamus* from heaven with a peremptory command for Confession upon such conditions, and we, *submitimus fasces*, will yield the Bucklers, as extremely loth to espouse any contrary opinion to the expresse word of God. Therefore speak Lord, for thy servants would g'adly hear. The Lord hath said indeed, *Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit*; but no where, *Except a man repent*, and be shriven by a Priest, *he cannot enter into the king- dome of God*. This is it the School-men and Jesuites have sought for narrowly, and are yet to seek. And how well they have found it in these words, *whose sins soever ye remit, &c.* hath in part been discussed; and *Cajetan* saith (but is checked for so saying) that the *institution* of repentance may there be found, but no *precept*.

*Quod Cajetanus in Commentariis super hunc locum asserit, institutionem Sacramenti Pœnitentiæ inde haberi, non præceptum, certissimè fallitur.* Canus Relect. de Pœnit. pag. 899.

A late Sorbonist hath found another Precept; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.* But how is Auricu- lar confession concluded here? marry thus, *The man that hath lost the grace of God is by Gods law obliged to recover the same, for lost the grace of God is by the commandment he is expressly tied to love God with*

Tout homme qui a perdu la grace, est tenu & obligé de droit divine de la recouvrer:

attendu que pas commandment expresse, il est tenu d'aimer Dieu de tout son cœur, Diliges Do- minum, &c. Or celui qui n'a point la grace, n'aime point son Dieu, & l'homme pecheur est privé de cete grace; il est donc tenu de la recouvrer, & il la recouvre en confessant ses pechez au Frere. Pierre Bels, Caesime, Tom. 2. p. 723. A Paris. 1628.



all his heart, Diliges Dominum, &c. Now that man who is destitute of grace loveth not God, and each sinful man is deprived of that grace; he ought then to endeavour the recovery thereof; and it is recovered in confessing his sins unto a Priest. If this discourse of this Doctors were sound, confession being consequently inferred, and not expressly delivered, would fall out to be an *Eccho* of Gods word rather than the word it self. The force of this reason (saith he) depends upon this saying of *Ambrose*, No man can be justified except he shall confess his sin; but the truth is, the consequence is very lame, and sheweth, how wild humane discourse will grow in Sacred Mysteries, except disciplined by Religion. The saying of *Ambrose* is firm, for Justification consisteth in the forgiveness of sin, and sin cannot be forgiven except it be acknowledged; but neither doth *Ambrose* say it ought precisely to be confessed to a Priest, nor that confession to a Priest is precisely necessary to Justification. The Doctors fabrick then hangs very loosely, and if lost grace may be recovered any other way, it falls to the ground. Verily *Origen* (as we have heard) reckoned up seven wayes to remission of sins, whereof Confession is one, then not the onely way. And *Scotus* (whose argument this is, and from him the Doctor had it) expected that answer, viz. because another way may be as good to come by grace as this, sc. by the mean of absolution from a Priest; therefore it concludes not this to be the onely way. For if this kind of Confession were the onely course, and lost grace could not be recovered but by this means, then it were necessarily to be embraced. But now *Scotus*

dares not affirm it to be the onely precise way; he rather commends it for an *ease* way, and so ready to hit, that we cannot lightly miss it; for here's nothing (if you trust him) to bar thee from grace, if thou bar not thy self; bring but *attrition*, which is but the *embryo* of true sorrow, and a purpose to cast off thy sins, as a Mariner casteth out his goods in a tempest; yea,

Non potest quis  
spem à pecca-  
to iustificari,  
nisi fuerit an-  
tea confessus  
peccatum.  
Ambr. lib. de  
Paradiso.

Sacramentum penitentiae est via utilis, est  
tam n. alia utilis, quare non probat istam esse  
praecisam ad illam recuperandam— nulla  
alia est via ita facilis, & certa; hic enim ni-  
hil obstat, nisi ponere obicem ad gratiam; so-  
lum requiritur opus exterius cum amotione in-  
terioris impediendi, hoc est, habens voluntate  
suscipiendi Sacramentum Ecclesiae, & sine  
obice peccati mortalis actualiter sibi facto, reci-  
pit non ex merito, sed ex pacto divino effectum  
istius Sacramenti. Scotus li. 4. d. 14. Q. 4.  
Se. 2. Quantum ad tertium.

give but way onely to the virtue of absolution, and it will of it self, without any disposition in thee, restore grace forfeited, and pardon. A very compendious and easie way of gaining salvation, wherein the effect of Repentance is gained without repentance; and remission of sins without contrition; and an impenitent person resorting to shrift, and bringing no repentance, reaps there the benefit. O Divine drug! or else O Devilish Mountebanke! by which Spiritual kind of Cosenage, many are perswaded that the Priests acquittance without more ado is a *Quietus est*, and that old scores are struck off; and so they sin and confess, confess and sin afresh, treading this maze, and dancing that *Mattacini* so long, till a fearful *catastrophe* inclose them: for if this of *Scotus* were true (as God forbid it should) that the *Sacrament of Penance*, without the virtue of Repentance should confer the virtue; very few would be virtuous, and real penitents, but Sacramental onely. A course imbraced (I fear) by too many, who run on all the year in sinning, and think to strike off all by an annual shrift; as if that formality were the onely *appennage* of mercy, with the undergoing of some petty observances, imposed by the Ghostly Father, and those too an Indulgence procured by a little silver can dispense with; is not this a goodly argument brought to prove the necessity of Confession, that abolisheth the virtue of Repentance?

There is another reason behind which goeth up and down amongst popish Divines, for the necessity of Confession, drawn from the nature thereof; a *huge burden*, and is couched thus; we make it our pleasure, and willingly undertake things delightful and grateful to our dispositions, but not willingly would stoop like *Issachar* under heavy burdens, except necessity cast them upon us, as desire of health may sweeten bitter re-

ceipts; for if any thing of use in the *Catholick Church* may be said to be hard, and heavy, surely it is confession; what more molestious or burthensome to *Princes, Prelates, and all sorts of*

*Si qua res est in Ecclesiu Catholica que gravis ac difficilis videatur, sine dubitatione ulla confessio est. Quid molestius, quid onerosius, quam ut cogantur etiam viri Principes peccata sua omnia deregere, quamvis arcana, quamvis turpia, quamvis pudenda? & Sacerdotum iudicio stare, & multam ab eis impostam subire? Bellar. lib. 3. de Pœnit. c. 12.*

men, than to be constrained to rip up their sins, many times sud  
of shame, of lewdness, of horror; and to stand, and submit to  
the Priests censure, and mercy, in undergoing a fire, or mullt  
imposed by him? Some great necessity sure there is, else this  
duty would be out of practice. I can-

not easily believe the Fathers (saith  
Bishop Fisher) would have imposed  
so hard a task upon us, if they had not  
been thoroughly perswaded, confession to  
have been of an Apostolical institution,  
or else to have been clearly delivered in  
the holy Scriptures, as a thing exceed-

ing necessary for all kind of sinners. Thus they. It cannot be  
denied that Romish Confession is an Egyptian bondage; nor  
can it be proved that any such was imposed by the Ancient  
Fathers, much less to be of Apostolical constitution, and least  
of all to have any light from the holy Scriptures. Nor is it any  
wonder that so many stoop their necks and bow their shoulders  
thereunto, considering that the most ridiculous religions con-  
sist of the most rigorous Superstitions: what auster Idolatry was  
that for Baals Priests, lancing themselves to procure audience?

And most unnatural, and cruel Sa-  
crifices those, for Parents to com-  
mit their dearest children in the  
flames to Moloch, and to drown  
their cries in the aires of Musick.  
Gods desire is for the people to be  
his servants, whereas the Devil

ever makes his servants slaves. Who had seen a Prince of this  
land, uncover his back, and submit himself to be scourged by  
Monks, would not have complained of vile servitude? The  
Scribes and Pharisees laid heavy burdens, and grievous to be born  
upon the people; yet none of all these were of God. *Tantum*

*Religio potius suadere malorum.* Religion, said I? no, God sent  
them strong delusions to believe lies; they were besotted with a  
superstitious fear, and so became slaves to the Roman yoke. Joseph. Aco-  
sta relateth a strange Confession observed in Japan, Joseph. Aco-  
sta, hist. India-  
rum. l. 5. c. 25.  
thus; "There are in Ocaca very high and steep rocks, which

Neque facild crediderim Patres ipsos hanc  
usque adeo duram provinciam nobis imposuisse,  
nisi persuasissimum habuissent hanc exomologe-  
sin ab Apostolis institutam, aut in ipsis Scri-  
pturis dilucide traditam fuisse, ceu rem cunctis  
peccatoribus apprimè necessariam. Roffenl.  
contr. Luther. pag. 132. 2.

Saltabant interim quo pueri in Idolo suc-  
censo igne cremabantur, percutientes tympana  
ne pueri ejulatus audiretur. Paul. Phagius in  
Cald. Paraphraf. in Levit.

Δαίμονες πῆξοντες σφελῆρας νέκυνς καὶ  
ψαῖς.

Henry 2. apud  
Marth. Paris,  
Marth. 23. 3.

2 Thes. 2. 11.

Joseph. Aco-  
sta, hist. India-  
rum. l. 5. c. 25.

“ have pikes on them above 200 fadome high ; One of which,  
 “ surmounting the rest for height, and to the *Xambusis* (a  
 “ kind of Pilgrims) terrible to behold ; upon the top whereof  
 “ there is a great rod of Iron three fathom long, placed there  
 “ artificially ; at the end of this rod is a balance tied, whereof  
 “ the scales are so big as a man may sit in one of them ; and  
 “ the *Goguis* (Devils in human shape) command one of the  
 “ *Xambusis* to enter into one of them and there sit ; forthwith  
 “ by an Engine the rod is pendent in the air, and the empty  
 “ scale is raised up to touch the rod whereunto the ballance is  
 “ fastned, the Pilgrim hanging below in the other. Then the  
 “ *Goguis* telleth him, that he must confesse all the sins that he  
 “ can remember, with an audible voice ; whereupon some of  
 “ the hearers laugh, and some sigh. At every sin mentioned,  
 “ the other scale falls a little, till that, having told all, it re-  
 “ mains equall with the other, wherein the sorrowful Penitent  
 “ sits : then the *Goguis* turns the wheel, and draws the rod,  
 “ and ballance to him, and the empty Pilgrim comes forth. If  
 “ any sin be concealed, the empty scale yeeldeth not ; and if the  
 “ Pilgrim grow obstinate, the *Goguis* casts him down from the  
 “ top, where instantly he is broken into a thousand pieces ; but  
 “ the terrour of the place is such, that few will conceal any  
 “ thing : the place hereof is called *Sangenotocoro*, that is, the  
 “ place of Confession. Lo here an exact confession upon a  
 “ terrible engine full of horror and dread to the party that maketh  
 “ trial thereof ; and shall we say that the ballance of *Ocaca*  
 “ was of divine institution ? the difficulty then of the attempt,  
 “ and streightnes of the yoke doth not necessarily imply the thing  
 “ it self to be authorized by God, and commended to the Church  
 “ by the Apostles.

If these persuasions induce not to a necessity, what say  
 you if one should come from the dead, and preach how ne-  
 cessary this duty is ? I cannot say such a Ghost should of  
 necessity be believed. Let us come then to visions, and revela-  
 tions ; not such, I fear, as the Apostles were, from the Lord, but  
 λόγος, ὁ φανταστος, strong, and strange delusions. Hearken then  
 to the stories. “ Bede relateth of a Courtier to King *Etheldred*,  
 “ whom the King much favoured though his life were dissolute,  
 “ and

2 Cor. 12. 1.

Spec. exem-  
plor. dist. 2.  
Sect. 107.

“and often dealt with him to confess his sins, and amend his life;  
 “especially in a time of his sickness, which he then put off till  
 “his recovery, as loth to confess his sins at that time, lest his  
 “companions should upbraid him as timorous; words of a re-  
 “solute, but not religious heart. Not long after the King  
 “continuing his visits, and exhortations to confession; he  
 “cries out fearfully, that it was too late, and tells his Master  
 “how two comely young men appeared, and offered him a  
 “little book, and bad him read the few good works that he  
 “had done; and after their departure, a hideous troop of  
 “Friends appeared also, and one of them delivered him a book  
 “of an immense volume, containing at large the wickedness  
 “he had done, and bade him peruse the same, so challenging  
 “him for theirs. This Courtier it seemes lost himself for not  
 striking out the *Chirographum* which was against him, by con-  
 fession. I wote well this Writer, saith Mr *Lambard*, upon  
 the like occasion is called *venerabilis*; but when I read this,  
 and a number of such which make the one half of his work, I  
 say with my self as sometimes did the Poet,

*Fortiter qui-  
 dam ut sibi vi-  
 debatur locutus,  
 sed miserabili-  
 ter. Beda.*

*Perambulation of Kent.  
 pag. 235.*

*Quodcumque offendis mihi sic incredulus odi.*  
 What ever thing thou shewest so, I hate it as a lie.

That story sheweth how a man was damned for want of Con-  
 fession for his sins recorded against him. I can tell you of ano-  
 ther that cancelled all such records of sin by confession; and  
 so it is. “A thief (not he upon the Cross) desired to enter  
 “into Religion; the Abbot for his triall, required him to  
 “publish solemnly the sins he had privately revealed. To  
 “which purpose all the Religious of that *Covent* assembled in  
 “the Church: The Convert is by some of the brethren led  
 “along bound, and beaten, clothed in Sack and his head  
 “powdered with ashes. In this sort ready to enter, he is pro-  
 “hibited by the Abbot, thundring unto him his unworthiness;  
 “which strake him into tears, and prostrate on the earth; then  
 “upon command he openly confessed sins of that nature, and  
 “against nature, as not fit to be recorded. And that while,  
 a Religious man amongst them beheld one with a great scroll,

*Spec. Exempl.  
 d. 2. Sect. 100.*

*A quibuldam  
 festibus vin-  
 cis, trahitur,  
 cilicio sacco  
 vestitus.*

*Non hominis  
 vocem, sed to-  
 nitrui.*

obliterating

*Sine qua nullus  
indulgent. am  
sortitur.*

Colof. 2. 14.

*Quia habeo nonnullos qui peccata quidem  
necdum confessi sunt, quocirca & illos ad con-  
fessionem hoc exemplo provoco. Climac. Grad.  
4. cap. 2.*

*Nulla prius peccatorum confessione praecunte,  
gravissimas negligentiae suae poenas experti  
sunt;—files & mures nigerrimi tanto nume-  
ro tamque horribiles noctu apparuerunt. Cop.  
Dialog. 2. pag. 297, 298.*

*Histor. & alia  
impressa ante  
Alcoran. p. 99.*

*Casaub. praefat.  
de libert. Eccle-  
sia.  
Poenarum cele-  
bres sub styge  
feriae. Prudent.  
Bellar. de  
purg. l. 2. c. 18.  
Sect. ad quin-  
tum.*

“obliterating, and dashing out such crimes as he confessed. And this, saith the Relator, was done to incline such as had not then confessed their sins, to undertake the same, *without which no man can come by pardon.* By this vision I perceive the hand-writing that is against us may be blotted out some other way, than at Christs Cross onely; and however this *Abbot* might aime hereby to countenance confession, yet the *Trent* Fathers will tell him it was not so advisedly done, to draw a man upon the Theatre; and some wrong is offered to private Confession, that the Penitents sins recorded against him, were not then defaced until he came to the publick. The Relation is fetched from *John Climacus* with little difference, to bring Confession into credit, then, as it appeareth by the neglect thereof, but meanly esteemed, and by many under his charge is little set by; for

*having many (saith he) that have not yet confessed, wherefore by this example I would stir them up to confession. Harpsfield Cope hath set forth* pause; and tells us full sadly that the Portugals assailing a Castle in the East Indies, came off with great loss, for not being armed with confession; and of a certain Portugall, to whom in the night there appeared a great number of black Cats and Mice, (impar congressus) very dreadful to see to, and ready to have devoured him, had they not been prevented by his prayers to a CRUCIFIX hanging in the room, and his vows to be shaven with all speed. I know not how such creatures as Cats and Mice may Cope in visions, otherwife they hold little correspondence, concerning the authority of such phantastick shades, wherewith the writings of Friars are replenished, more than with wisdom and learning: it may be said as the Turk did of Papal Indulgences granted by Pius II. to such as took armes against him, requiring his Holiness to call in his Epigrams again; and as Casaubon of the late interdict against the Venetian Republick, that it was *Dirum carmen*; and as Bellarmine of Prudentius appointing certain holy-dayes in hell for the damned souls to rest from their



their pains, that he did but play *more poetico*. So these and many other visions of this stamp, seem to me nothing else, but the *Poetry* of the Church of *Rome*, or a moral application of pious and useful fables.

Thou seest, good Reader, no necessary cause why Confession should be so necessarily urged; and our Church is the more sparing and tender in imposing any such absolute necessity upon these grounds following: The first is, because Auricular Confession hath not been practised continually in the Church, but is the daughter and successor of that which was publicly solemnized. I speak not of Confession in it self absolutely considered, which I have elsewhere laid down as a Divine Ordinance; but of the clancular and privy carriage thereof, to promote such ends as are designed in the *Roman Church*. I say, Confession so understood is not of absolute necessity, but of late introduction. Publick *exhomologesis* was in ancient times held such a sanctuary for troubled souls, that not onely scandalous sinners which were obliged thereunto, but many besides came in, and confessed openly their sins carried in secrecy, and submitted themselves to that discipline; yea, some devout Christians not stained with incensing unto Idols, or casting the holy Scripture into the fire (two scandals in those times purged with this discipline) guilty onely of lesser scars, and griefs, grew ambitious of undergoing this burden of publick Confession and Penance:

and hence it was that many a scoffing *Ismael*, and railing *Doeg* began to exprobrate and deride the Penitents. To this end therefore that the discipline might be carried in a discreet manner, a prudent *Minister* was appointed, to be made acquainted before hand, and by whose advise the *Penitent* was directed what sins onely were fit to be opened in publick Confession. And here is the first mention of Confession to a private *Confessor*, with the occasion annexed; that he hearing the story of a sinners life at large, may select such offences onely as seemed to him

fit

Reasons why  
Confession is  
not of absolute  
necessity in all  
cases, and over  
all persons.

I.

*Qui de fide majore, & timore meliore erant, quamvis nullo Sacrificii, aut libelli facinoræ constrieti — apud Sacerdotes Dei dolenter & simpliciter confitentur, exhomologesi conscientia suæ faciunt, animi sui pondus exponunt, salutarem medelam parvis licet, & modicis vulnibus requirunt. Cypr. l. 2. de laps.*

*Multi verd audientes vel exprobrant, vel irridunt, vel male loquuntur. Chennit.*

*Circumspice diligentius cui deas confiteri peccatum tuum; proba prius Medicum. — Siat illiixerit, & prouiderit tales esse languorem tuum, qui in conuentu totius Ecclesie exponi debeat, & curari; ex quo fortassis ceteri edificari poterunt, & tu ipse facili feras, multa hoc deliberatione, & sitis perito Medici illius consilio procurandum est.* Oigen. hom. 2. in Ps. 37. tom. 1. p. 293.

*fit for publication. Be circumspect* (saith *Oigen*) to whom thou art to Confess; prove thy Physician first, and if he shall understand, and foresee thy disease to be such, as ought to be exposed in the assembly of the Church, and there to be cured, whereby peradventure others may be edified, and thy self easily healed; this must be done upon great deliberation; and skilful advise of that Physician. Private sins therefore brought in private Confession, to hear them by the way, and to advise the Penitent whether they, or onely some of them are fit to be openly known, and in such cases to direct him further what course he should take in publick Penance.

But in process of time this rigour, and devotion melted, and many abstained from this Confession, as abhorring to publish their sins, and to bring themselves upon the stage: For in *Tertullians* age when this discipline was in force, and the Church exercised with persecution, it may seem strange that many should be more in fear of shame than death; abstain-

ing more from being *Confessors* of their faults, than *Martyrs* for the truth: I say the remedy was not as in his dayes, to arme the Penitent with resolution, for to trample under feet censure, and shame; but to remit something of the severity, namely,

*that the sin should be confessed in private, and buried there; onely the penance imposed was publickly to be performed; by which the Church gathered, (although she knew it not) that some grievous offence or other was committed, as Chemsisius explicateth from Sozomen, and the tripartite History. These whom you observe to do penance (saith Saint Augustine) have committed great sins, as adulteries, or some other foul faults; the penance by them*

*ut secreto confiterentur Sacerdoti, qui licet crimen illud in facie Ecclesie non proderet, iungebat tamen delinquenti publicam penitentiam, ut ipso facto in genere coram Ecclesia confiteretur, & declararet se grave aliquid commisisse.* Chemnit. ex Sozom. n. in histor. Tripartit. l. 9. c. 35.

*Illi, quos videtis agere penitentiam, scelera sua commiserant, aut adulteria, aut alia immunda facta.* Aug. l. 1. de symb. ad Carechum. c. 6.

them performed convincing them of hainous sin openly, though not evidencing the same unto all. Thus the Church became contented with *publick penance*, and remitted the confession of the sin unto private ears; howbeit the publick detection of sin was left off earlier in the *Greek Church*, than in the *Latin*; for in the *East*, the persecution under *Decius* was no sooner blown over, but that the Church appointed a discreet *Presbyter* to receive Confessions, that Penitents might resort unto him, and interest his bosome with their offences; out of which he was to select such, and prepare as he thought meet for the publick, and conceal the rest; and herein his office consisted. The substituting of this Officer is witnessed by *Socrates*, and *Sozomen* both, whereby the penitent was not as formerly left to his choice of what Physician he pleased, but confined to that

*Penitentiary* the Church had ordained; and this is that *addition*, viz. the election of one certain *Penitentiary*, which those Historians note to have been made unto the *penitential Canon*. But whether this *Penitentiary* was taken to receive Confession of all sins, and conceal them all, one-ly imposing publick Penance, or to discern what sins should publicly be

rehearsed, and what not, can hardly by the light of story be discerned: for the former opinion, namely, that none of the sins confessed were to be revealed, serveth that requisite quality that he should be *ἐχέμενος*, one that could lay his hand upon his mouth, and say nothing. And for the later, *scilicet*. that some sins were revealed, appeared by the confession of the vitiated Matron, so foul, that it caused the Church to stop the mouth of all publick Confession ever after. My thoughts lead me to this issue, that the *Primitive Penitents* were too forward to confess publicly more than needed; therefore it was ordained that they should confess in private first, and then if any of their sins were deemed fit by the *Confessor* to come abroad in publick, they were admitted to that publick Medicine; whereas the succeeding Penitents were too remiss in publick

Οἱ ἐπίσκοποι τῷ ἐκκλησιαστικῷ κανόνι  
καὶ προσβύλεον καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς μελανοίας προσ-  
έθεσαν. *Socrat. hist. l. 5. c. 19.*

*Episcopi hanc prescriptionem Canoni adjecerunt,  
ut Presbyter bona conversationis, prudens, &  
ἐχέμενος, ad hoc ordinaretur, ut lapsi ad il-  
lum accederent, ipsi confiterentur peccata.*  
*Chemnit. ex Sozomen. Examp. p. 192.*

Confession, and needed the spur; insomuch that offences of that nature as needed publick expiation, and discovered upon a private hearing, were reserved for the Theatre, and they obliged to publick recital, and penance. And when this also was taken away upon the Matrons stupration, and the Church would hear no more of such matters; without doubt the Confession and Penitentiary too were then abrogated.

In the *Latin Church* the discipline was on foot till *Leo I.* who was the first that exiled the same, and set up *Auricular Confession* in its stead. In whose dayes a writing, the contents whereof were particular sins, was exhibited by the Delinquents to be publickly read in Churches; the same was attempted for

*Declarat non licere per literas seu inter-nuncium Confessario absenti peccata Sacra-mentaliter confiteri, & ab eodem absolutio-nem obtinere. Caracalla vit. Clem. 8. in Platinae supplem.*

*absolution from a Priest not*

*Ne de singulorum peccatorum genere libellis scripto professio recitetur, cumque reatus sufficiat conscientiarum solis sacerdotibus indicari confessione secretâ. Quamvis enim plenitudo fidei videatur esse laudabilis, quæ propter Dei timorem apud homines erubescere non veretur, tamen quia non omnium hujusmodi sunt peccata, ut ea quæ penitentiam poscunt non timeant publicare; removeatur tam improbabilis consuetudo, ne multi à penitentia arceantur remediis, dum aut erubescunt, aut metuent inimicis suis facta sua referre, quibus possint legum constitutionibus percelli: sufficit enim illa Confessio, quæ primum Deo offertur, tunc etiam Sacerdoti, qui pro delictis Penitentium peccator accedit; quod tum demum plures ad penitentiam poterunt provocari, si populi auribus non publicetur Conscientia confitentis. Leo Epist. 80. ad Episcopos Campaniæ, &c.*

*of the laws. For that confession is sufficient which is offered first*

private confession not long since; and as that course was broken off by *Leo*, so this attempt by *Clement VIII.* who condemned the same as false, temerarious, and scandalous, to confess by deputation, or writing, and receive the injunction of *Leo* followeth; Let not a confession of several sins conceived in writing be publickly rehearsed, seeing it may suffice that the guilt of mens consciences be declared in secret Confession to the Priests alone: for although the fulness of faith may seem to be laudable, which for the fear of God doth not fear to blush before men; yet because all sins are not of that nature, that Penitents may not be afraid to publish such of them, as require repentance; Let so inconvenient a custome be removed, lest many be driven back from the remedies of repentance, whilest either they are ashamed, or afraid to disclose their deeds before their enemies; whereby they may be drawn within the peril

first unto God, and then unto the Priest, who cometh as an Intercessor for the sins of the Penitent; for then at length we may be provoked to Repentance, if that the Conscience of him that confesseth be not published to the ears of the people. From this testimony of *Leo* we may observe, 1. That to open confession of secret sins, secret confession succeeded in the room thereof. 2. We may observe also the reasons of this alteration, viz. fear and danger of the law, which accompanied the former practice, and retarded many from the same; to remove which impediments it self also was removed, or rather changed, 3. And lastly, that the manner of Confession, be it private, or publick, is but a Church-constitution, and the law thereof but temporal, and may be changed at the discretion of the Church; as that ancient discipline so highly extolled by the *Fathers*, yet by *Leo* is removed as an unprofitable custome, and subject to divers inconveniences, and notwithstanding his edict, the times may come when the same may be fancied again, and private Confession give way thereunto. Private Confession then is not an ordinance of absolute necessity, the thing to be demonstrated. And therefore that conjecture of *Beatus Rhenanus* (for which his mouth is stopt by the *Index expurg.*) is more than probable, that clancular confession now in use took its beginning from the publick, by the voluntary devotion of men, that of secret sins there might be held a secret confession; for we do not read that of old it was any where commanded.

*Ne quis admittatur Tertullianum de clancularia ista admittorum confessione nihil loquutum, quæ*

*quantum conjicimus, nata est ex ista exomologesi per ultroneam hominum pietatem, ut occultorum peccatorum esset & exomologesis occulta; nec enim usquam præceptam legimus. B. Rhenan. Arg. lib. de Pœnit. pag. 11. edit. Franckæræ, 1597.*

And this is our first ground that Private Confession is not of supreme necessity. The second is founded upon a decree of *Nectarius* sometimes Patriarch of *Constantinople*, and immediate Predecessor to Saint *Chrysostome*, by which act, upon an occasion of infamy drawn upon the Clergy by the confession of a Gentlewoman defiled by a Deacon in the principal Church of the Imperial City, it was thought fit the same should be abolished, and every one left to the liberty, and examination of his own conscience, in resorting to the blessed Sacrament :

2:

*Nectarius* and his act for abolishing of Confession.

Socrat. lib. 5.  
cap. 19. vide  
Sozom. lib. 7.  
c. 16.

the Narrative is thus in Socrates; *It seemed good unto the Church to take away the office of such Priests as were appointed throughout every Church to receive Penitents, after the Confession of their sins, into the company of the faithful. The occasion of the removal by Neſtarius was; A Noble woman came unto the Priest, whose office it was to hear penitents, and confessed orderly the sins she had committed after Baptisme, the Priest injoyning her to bring forth the fruits of Repentance: As she continued longer in striving, she accused herself of another crime, and declareth, that a certain Deacon of that Church had abused her body; at which the people being much incensed, and the Church defamed, the Bishop upon the advice of Eudæmon, a Minister of that Church, took away the function of the striving Priest, and granted free liberty to every one (as his conscience served him) to become partaker of the holy mysteries. Thus far Socrates, professing withall that he could not well tell what to think of Eudæmons advise in this behalf, whether it would ought avail the Church or no, or be a means that sins escape without just reprehension: his thoughts he should have kept to himself; for an historian must ever conceal his affections, and never the truth, adhering to the verity of the fact, and leaving the censure unto others. It cannot be imagined into how many shapes the Divines of Rome turn themselves, to turn off, or to turn away this decree: some condemn this*

*Quamvis legatur abrogasse hanc consuetudinem, hoc tamen non probat eam non esse juris divini; non enim omne quod fit, justè fit. M. Vehe, tract. 6. de Confess. c. 7.*

*Patriarch for condemning the same, although we read (saith Vehe) that Neſtarius abrogated this custome, yet this disproveth not, but that it might be of divine right; for not every thing*

*that is done, is justly done. Our Cope inclineth to this opinion, that the words of the story favour the taking away of confession, but then tels us withall, that Neſtarius did as much hurt to the Church by unbridling this discipline, as Novatus did by locking up the mercy of God with his severer key. If Neſtarius (saith he) had abrogated private confession, and opened the gap to every man with unwashed hands, and souls, to have free*

*Si Neſtarius privatum confessionem abrogavit, & illius (quod dicitur) non tam*

*manibus, quam animis ad corpus Christi accipiendum ingerendi se quibuslibet aditum prefece-rit, (quod ipsa fortè verba si generaliter accipias, præ se ferunt) is non minùs Ecclesiæ nimis à licentiâ, quam immodicâ illâ suâ severitate incommodasset. Cop. dialog. 2. p. 294.*

*access*



access to receive the body of Christ, (which peradventure the words if you take them generally may seem to import) he had prejudiced the Church no less by that excessive licentiousness, than Novatus had done by his immoderate severity. Against these men we oppose the credit and authority that Nestorius had with the Churches of God; for they were so far from imagining any detriment to arise unto the Church by this decree of his, that they became all of his minde. The Catholick Bishops of those times approving and ratifying the same; so Sozomen: with the heretical conventicles it (the use of Confession) was retained, but in the Churches of the Homousians, or Orthodox believers (saith Socrates) it was antiquated. Of whose side then are they which so sharply rebuke Nestorius? (a) Another rank of them seem to embrace the act, but with a limitation, that it was the publick confession and penance which he abrogated, and not private confession, but the addition to the Penitential, which the Patriarch repealed; and that was the erection of a Penitentiary to receive Confessions, and unfold some sins unto the Bishop (if needful) that such might be ripped up in publick confession; and this discipline as an appendix to the former, was in opposition to the rigorous hand of Novatus suppressed. But Bellarmine shall cope with Harpsfield, and tell him that cannot be, because a Penitentiary having heard confession in private, his mouth is so locked up, that he cannot under any pretence reveal any sin so revealed, unto the Bishop, or to his H. linefs himself, though he should command it, it being against the law of nature, and Apostolical rule: the (b) Cardinal then hath restrained the story to these three positions, and bounds: 1. The first, that notorious Penitents, and publick offenders were subject to this penitentiary onely; and that sinners for sins committed secretly might address themselves in confession to other Priests. 2. The second, that if any private sins, and conscions to the sinner onely, were confessed to this Penitentiary, he was not bound to detect them, but had his lips sealed up to secrecy. 3. And lastly, That publick sins onely and such as were known aforehand, were by his command rehearsed by the Penitents before the congregation, and publick penance undergone for them. Against these fancies of the Cardinal;

Επικολούθη-  
σαν ὁ ἁγὸς ἄν-  
δρ' ὅτι πάντες  
ἐπισκοποῖ.  
Lib 7.c.16.

(a) Harpsfield  
supra.

Ista revelatio  
est contra jus  
nature, & A-  
postolicam re-  
gulam. l. 3. de  
pen. c. 14.

(b) Ibid.

dinal, I demand, If publick sins, and such as are come abroad into the world are here onely meant, what need open sins to be opened in secret to a *Penitentiary*? and why could not the Church proceed to censure notorious sins, without that under-hand detection? And what will this *jesuit* say to another, a greater Antiquary than himself, *Petavius*? who comes roundly off, and tells us there was never any such thing as publick confession; that neither publick nor private sins were openly confessed, either by the Penitents in their own persons, or recited out of a scroll by the Priests, as generally hath been supposed; from which common tenet he professeth his earnest dissent, nor

*A quibus omnibus ego vehementer dissentio; nec adduci possum ut ex sinum legem ullam in Ecclesia fuisse unquam ejusmodi, quæ peccata profecti publicè decreverit. D. Petav. animadvers. in Epiphani. hæc. 49. pag. 246.*

— *commentum publicæ confessionis ingeniosè ac soterter excogitarunt, quia alium exitum difficultatis expedire non possint. Ib.*

can he be brought to imagin that there was ever any such law in the Church at any time, which decreed that sins should be publickly pronounced; and further informes us how that jingle of publick confession was ingeniously de-

vised by writers on his side, to avoid the engines, and stocks of heretical arguments; being driven to that strait as to be able to come off no other way. We will not lose time to examine the grounds of this assertion; but taking publick Confession for granted, and supposing those sins publick in themselves to be rehearsed in a private way; we say according to their doctrine, they remain shut up under the seal, because deposited in confession, and though otherwise known, yet the Penitentiary is put to silence; and the use, *viz.* detection of sins capable of publick penance, for which the Penitentiary was ordained, is quite and clean taken away. No wonder then that in *Bellarmines* opinion, it is not certainly known what his function was. Furthermore, be his function what it will, it is manifest that both he and it were done away; but this ordinance, *viz.* Publick sins to be censured with publick penance, was never abolished, either in the *East* or *Western* Churches. Likewise the *Matrons* sin with the *Deacon* was committed in private, and yet openly revealed; publick confession in the Church was not then of publick sins onely. And lastly, if none were to recourse unto the *Penitentiary* except publick sinners, and that for their publick offences,

*Que autem esset functio Presbyteri non est omnino certum. Bellar. suprà.*

fences; to what end was it so specially required that he should be ἐξέμυσθαι, no blab of his tongue? What was it Νεκταριος did then in this behalf? Marry (saith the Cardinal) the whole story crieth it out, how not private but publick confession was abrogated by him: how deaf then were those Divines (though otherwise of a quick ear) that heard not this cry? I am not ignorant (saith he) that Thomas Walden was of this mind, that he supposed confession simply and absolutely to be abolished by Νεκταριος; but I cannot grant this, because John Chrysostom clearly defended the sentence of Νεκταριος. Then whatsoever herein was

Tetranarratio, clamat non auricularem, sed publicam confessionem à Νεκταριο abrogatam. Bellar. ib.

provided by Νεκταριος, the same was protected by Saint Chrysostome; and Thomas Walden, though a Transalpine man, was as choise in his judgment as the Cardinal; no more could it lie hid from him, that F. Walden stood not alone in that opinion, for Cansus bears him company thus;

Νεκταριος predecessor to S. Chrysostom, took secret confession clean away, as Sozomen delivered in that chapter; wherefore his successor Saint Chrysostom would make no words of this auricular confession to the people, because the scandal was not yet laid, occasioned in the Church of Constantinople, by the means of private Confession. For which saying he is perstringed in the Colin edition, Anno Dom.

in the Margin, where the Reader is informed, that John Hessel, a famous Divine, hath look'd into the story more accurately, who delivering his opinion to the Fathers in the Trent Council, learnedly demonstrated from the context of Sozomen it self, that it was not auricular confession, but an appendix thereof, that is, the publick recital of sins upon the Theatre, made by the

Non igitur Thomam Waldensem Tom. 2. c. 141. in ea sententia fuisse, ut existimaret, à Νεκταριο confessionem simpliciter abrogatam fuisse — sed non facile id concederem, quod Νεκταrii sententiam Jo. Chrysostom. apertissime tueatur. Bellar. supra.

Νεκταριος antecessor D. Chrysostomi confessionem secretam de medio sustulerat, ut illo capite Sozomen. tradit: quomobrem Chrysostomus Νεκταριο succedens, de confessione hac auriculari populo verba facere noluit; quia enim nondum scandalum sedatum erat, quod in Ecclesia Constantinopolitana per occasionem secretae confessionis fuit exortum. Can. Relect. de poenit. part 5. pag. 897.

1605. with a note clapt

Oculatius locum illum hiff. Trip. inspicie Jo. Hessel, & ipse eximius Theologus, qui in sententia sua de hoc Sozomeni loco Patris concilii Trid. exhibita, creditur ex ipso contextu Sozomeni ostendit, à Νεκταριο non auricularem confessionem, sed eius appendix quendam, h. e. publicam illam peccatorum recitationem fuisse sublatam; quae fuit à communi quodam Penitentiario coram universo populo, velut in Theat. quodam. Nota in Ma g. n.

*Penitentiary before the face of all the people, &c.* By warrant of which appendix it appeareth, that the *Penitentiary* before the decree of *Nectarius* might break the seal, and publish what sins he pleased; a thing that egregious Divine must take heed of, lest by avoiding one rock he dash upon another. I know not with what eyes, or through what perspective Hessel might view the relation, to blunt *Vehes* sight it appeared otherwise;

*Licet mixtim ibi sermo sit de solenni & privata confessione, tamen cum dicitur electum esse Sacerdotem servan-tem secretum, aperte monstratur, hoc non ad publicam pertinere confessionem, sed ad clanculariam. Vnde tract. de Conf. 6. c. 4.*

*Although (quoth he) the narration be mixt of solemn and private confession, notwithstanding seeing it is said, how a Priest was chosen that could keep secret, it is very clear that this appertained not unto publick but private Confession. Add hereunto Bishop Fi-*

*sher, a Prelate to whom Rome can take no just exception; who upon those words of Sozomen, It seemed good unto the ancient Bishops that sins (a) should be opened upon a Theatre, in the presence and audience of all the people within the Church;*

*and to this purpose a Priest of upright conversation, that could keep counsel was elected. and appointed to hear such confes-*

*sions, writeth thus; Some man may object this is meant of publick confession; to whom we answer, that it cannot be so meant, seeing the Priest himself was commanded to keep it secret; for how could that be kept secret that was discerned by publick confession? But another will say, why then hath Sozomen written, It seemed good unto the ancient Bishops, that sins should be published upon the Theatre, and before the assembly? Truly to this end, that the Penitents should not resort unto the Priests within private walls, -where scandal*

*might arise, especially upon the approaches of Women, but publickly in the Church, not so as if they should there manifest their sins*

*unto*

*At objectabit fortasse quispiam, quod hoc de publica confessione scriptum sit; cui respondemus, id fieri non posse, cum ipse Presbyter tenetur servare decretum (lege secretum;) nam quomodo secretum servare potuit, quod fuit publica confessione decretum? sed dicit alius, quid ergo Sozomen. scripsit, vult antiquis Pontificibus ut in Theatro, &c. ob id nimirum ut confessuri nequaquam ad Presbyterium in privatis adibus accederent, unde potuerint offendicula oriri, & maxime feminis confitentiis. — sed publicitus in Ecclesia; non tamen ita quod illi publice delicta sua cunctis manifestarent, sed uni Presbytero tantum, arg. id. clanculum.*

unto all, but to the Priest alone, and that privately. So the place of confession was to be publick not the confession it self, which was privately received. This Bishop proceeds, informing us, That publick sinners resorted not unto the Penitentiary, but to the Bishop, and by him were ordered. But such as confessed privately to the Priest, at his hands received penance onely. Thou seest plainly that in this Doctors opinion private confession was hereby meant, and his reasons for the same; and mayest further see, how well these Cardinals agree. It was publick confession of publick faults (saith Cardinal Bellarmine;) Publick confession could not be here meant, saith Cardinal Fisher. This Priest was appointed for publick sins onely, saith Bellarmine; Publick sinners came not to the Priest, but to the Bishop, saith Fisher. Thus God confounds their tongues that build Babel. Well, Fishers conclusion is, that Nectarius abolished this Penitential Presbyter, and left every man to his own conscience; which could not be understood of publick sins, (for they still were punished in the Church) but of private faults onely. How apparently false then is the assertion of the Cardinal Jesuit, viz. *At confess that Nectarius abolished publick, not private confession; and of another Jesuit, that the one was not, and the other was not abolished, but publick penance onely;* may appear by the discourse of this Cardinal Bishop, and Pope-Martyr. And if none of these evasions will serve, Bellarmine is not ignorant of another starting hole, *sc.* to elevate the faith of the Historiā and call his credit into question; a shelter never fled unto but in desperate Rormes. The truth is, by the ancient Canons hainous sins were onely subject to the censure of this discipline of vulgar confession, (the confession then onely frequented.) Others moved with devotion, subjected themselves thereunto without sufficient cause; which to redress, the Fathers exhorted the people not to go so confusedly to work, but to consult with their spiritual Physicians, what

*Publici pœnitentes non ad hunc Presbyterum, sed ad Episcopum accesserunt, eius sententia jejuniis, &c. — at illis qui Presbytero privatim confitebantur, secundum universisque culpam, Presbyter ipse taxatio nullam. Rossenf. contr. Luth. art. 8. p. 137. 1.*

*Presbyter iste solis publicis pœnitentibus pœpositus.*

*Nequaquam pro publicis criminibus intelligi debeat, quæ semper publicè vindicabantur, — sed pro peccatis admissis duntaxat. Id. ib.*

*Publicam pœnitentiam sustulit, non confessionem. Petav. Doct. temp. lib. 13. part. 2. p. 755.*

*Scio quibusdam visum fuisse totam hanc historiam esse confutatam à Sacrate. Bellarm. supra.*

Εὐχαριστοῦν  
 ὁ Θεὸς καὶ ὁ  
 ἰσχυρὸς  
 Νότος. *Socras.*  
 Confession  
 put out of the  
 Church by  
 Nestarius. An.  
 Dom. 390. Pe-  
 riod. Jul. 5103.  
 uriusq. C. 7.  
 Cycli S. A. II.  
 Indict. 3.

3.  
 Confession of  
 no use in the  
 Greek Church.

Quidam Deo  
 solummodo  
 peccata confite-  
 ri debere di-  
 cuntur Græci.  
 Grat. dist. 1. de  
 Pœnit. c. ult.

Fidetur irrep-  
 sisse in textum  
 ex margine, & marginalem annotationem imperiti alicujus fuisse, qui ex sacro Nestarii collegit,  
 sublatam omnino fuisse confessionem apud Græcos. Bellar. l. 3. de Pœnit. c. 5.

diseases were fit for that publick cure; and at length a certain *Priest* was appointed, to whom they were to resort, and he upon private hearing presented the Church with such sins as were worthy of publick notice; and this was the onely practick of Confession in *Nestarius* time, consisting in the private audience of sin, with reference to the publick censure: which was damn'd by his decree, and every man left to the judgment of his own conscience, which could not be, if private confession had been still kept on foot, and the sinner subjected to the censure of any Ghostly Father. Which abrogation then of confession simply considered, however it was carried in the dayes of that *Patriarch*, sheweth the form and prescript of confession used, and praised by the Ancients, to have been *Canonical* rather than *Divine*; belonging to the external discipline of the Church, (which upon just occasion might be altered) and not *Sacramental*, and of perpetual right, or absolute necessity; which is the *Helen* the *Jesuits* pretend unto, and by us in all cases denied.

Our last conjecture that Auricular Confession in the sense and practice of the Church of *Rome*, is not of absolute necessity binding all, and in all cases, is the cessation, or rather not admission thereof in the *Greek Church*; for the decree of *Nestarius* inhibiting the use of the then received confession, (such as it was) suspended the practick thereof in general; for there occurs not in *Damasces* tract *De orthodoxa fide*, the least impression thereof; and therein are treasured the principal doctrines, or doctrinal principles in Christianity, so it seems to have gone out of the Church, like a ship upon the waters, leaving no tract behind. Insomuch as *Gratian* citing the *Penitential* of *Theodorus* Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*, (which in truth was none of his, and no whit resembling an ancient copy thereof to be seen in *Sir Robert Cottens treasury*; but a *Canon* of the Council of *Canvilon*, celebrated *Anno DCCCXIII*) makes it an opinion of that Church, that sins were to be confessed unto God onely. I am not ignorant that *Bellarmino* would perswade us that those words (ut Græci) in *Gratian*, were by an

unskilful



unskilful hand first set in the Margent, and thence crept into the text, upon a surmise, that the fact of Nestarius had altogether abandoned confession from that Church; his reasons for this conjecture are so plumbeous, and little worth, as not worthy either of repetition, or refutation; for *Ivo* that imposed decrees before *Gratian*, hath the same: nor was the gloss, or any Canonist ever so nasute, as to smell out that intrusion in the decrees. Yet the Gloss draws an argument from hence against the Divine authority of Confession,

*Ivo decretal.*  
part. 15. c. 155.

because the *Gracians* denied it for necessary, as their practice sheweth, in wholly abstaining from the same; and necessary it had been, had it stood upon divine precept. For no Church may justly cast that forth of doors, once brought in upon divine injunction: and *Scotus* in way of answer thereunto seemes first to grant some such thing, with this protestation; That the *Gracians* since their departure from the Church, (that is since they disclaimed all agreement with Rome) have omitted many laudable customs, and might leave out confession, though laudable, and necessary; but tells us withall, that it is not certainly known how they use not confession, neither any Doctor taxing their abuses, reprehended the want thereof in particular. All which might well be, as reputed that want in those dayes of so small a trespassse, as not to be taken notice thereof, or not deserving any reprehension; to which later conjecture *Camus* consenteth. *Theodorus* delivereth (saith he) that the *Gracians* held sins to be confessed unto God alone, even as Baptism began not immediately upon Christs death to be a necessary mean to salvation; but at such time as the

Glossa tale argumentum innuit pro sua opinione, confessio non est necessaria apud Græcos; esset autem necessaria, si preceptum de ea esset autoritate Scripturæ. Scotus.

Respondeo, posito quod non sit apud eos talis consuetudo, multas alias laudabiles consuetudines omiserunt, quod ab Ecclesiis recesserunt; & ita istum non solum laudabilem, sed & necessariam potuerunt omittere. 2. sed nec notam quod non confiteantur, nec hoc alicubi aliqui Doctor scribens contra eorum abusiones, exprimit. Scot. lib. 4. dist. 17.

*Theodorus* dicit Græcos existimare solum esse confitenda peccata; quemadmodum itaque Baptismus non statim à passione Christi cepit esse medium necessarium omnibus ad salutem, sed post sufficientem Evangelii & Baptismi evulgationem; ita & Confessionis Sacramentum ex eo tempore cepit omnibus hominibus esse necessarium, etiam de peccatis secretis, quo sufficienter promulgatum est. Quo fit ut Græci ante plenam evulgationem, sine peccatorum confessione occultorum salvari potuerint. *Camus*, Relict. de Pœn. part. 5. p. 897.

Gospel, and Baptisme were sufficiently divulged: So the Sacrament of Confession for secret sins, from that time forward began to be necessary for all men, when it was sufficiently promulgated; whence it comes to pass that the Gracians before plenary publication might be saved without confessing their secret sins. The Greeks without all peradventure are beholding to Melchior Canus for this excuse, that they may be dispensed and born withall for not frequenting of Confession, because the necessity of that practick hath not yet been sufficiently cleared unto them. But is it not ill done of the Jesuits, those Apostolical men, that take upon them the conversion of Nations, so far to neglect their neighbour Christians all this while, as not to clear unto them a point of such importance? for the Nestorians (a wild slip of that tree) know not yet extreme unction, or confession, and the Jacobites in Syria, Palestina, &c. of which sect is the present Patriarch of Jerusalem, confess their sins unto God only, and not unto the Priest; and (as others record) but very seldom, so that many communicate without auricular confession: and how much it is prized by a principal member in that Church at this day, may be in part discovered under the hand of Cardinal Bardini to a Jesuited Greek, bred in the College at Rome, named Cannachi Rossi, concerning the Patriarch Cyrill, Anno Dom. 1627. whose deposition the Jesuites laboured, for not acknowledging the Roman Supremacy, wherein amongst other accusations charged upon him, the fourth instruction is;

*Of him we are advised that he denieth the necessity of Auricular confession, and the ein to display the sins of the mind; and that he hath brought into the place thereof a certain kind or forme of confession made principally unto God in general words. It seemeth by this*

passage that the modern Churches of Greece bear no good will to auricular confession.

The necessity then cannot be so forcing as Rome imagineth; what then, will you leave it to each mans discretion to be used, or forborn, as he shall think fit? So to leave it, were in effect to leave it off. Our corrupt natures restrained and kept

Purchas Pilgrim. part 3. pag. 38.  
Brierwood Enquiry. pag. 153.

*Di lui siano avvisati che nega — la necessità della confessione auricolare, & lo spiegare in essali peccati della mente, & che in loco di lei havesse introdotto una certa confessione fatta a Dio pubblicamente con parole generali. Turkish Histor. p. 1500.*

The necessity of Confession stated.

kept in, set but at a little liberty become licentious. The bending twig no sooner up, but declines unto the other side; and there can be no reason why a natural man is so much in the extremes, but because virtue stands in the middle. The experience of our times shews how ill a keeper mans discretion hath been of Confession, as quite and clean to loose the trust reposit; he had good reason therefore that said, *Such as go about to make this law free, endeavour to remove the same altogether out of the Church*; for if once this freedom be believed, and received, what man will submit his shoulders willingly to this burden? although burden it is none, but a wholesome medicine for a languishing soul.

I cannot think this duty hangs so loose as to depend upon the *meer motion* of every Penitent, and yet am far from imagining the law thereof to be so tyrannical, as to be obtruded upon the consciences of all men upon little or no occasions. To let blood in some diseases (saith an eloquent Physician) is no new thing; but that there should be scarce any disease wherein we should not bleed, is (saith he) a strange and new fashion. The soul-Physician may take aim by him for the body, and heal some sins, as he doth not all maladies by letting out of blood, and corruption; and if repentance be the *Antidote* against sin, and confession one of the *ingredients*, the use must depend as much at least upon the advice of the Spiritual Physician, as upon the voluntary inclination of the sick patient. God gave a command to confess unto the Priest, that we have heard; nor that it was ceremonial are we able to prove. The Ministers of the Gospel are enabled with power to *remit* and *retain* sins, and their lips preserve the *word of Reconciliation* for distressed consciences, that's clear, and as they are to prescribe the remedy, so is the penitent to open the disease. The Apostle heard sins confessed unto him, and rebuked not those that made them. The ancient *Fathers* stood much for the same, as a *profitable* mean at the least, to procure remission and pardon. And shall a duty so commanded, so advanced,

*Qui legem hanc liberam facere contendunt eam penitus de Ecclesia tollere moluntur; hac enim libertate creditur, & recepta, quis sibi obsecro hanc sarcinam imponit ultro? etsi sarcina non sit, sed saluberrima anime languescens medicina.* M. Vehe. Añert. sac. Axiom. tr. 5. c. 1.

advanced, so extolled, be of so thin and poor esteem, as to be blown away upon each mans fancy? as we are taught better things, so we hope for better. And although the *Reformed Church* well weighing the abuses wherewith the same was incumbered, (which begat a distaste and dislike of the thing it self with most men) was dully patient, and moderate at the conniving, and forbearance thereof, as loth to press its use too much upon squeasie stomachs, but onely to make it their *Physick*, that refused the same for their ordinary *Diet*: Yet seeing in these *Solar* dayes of ours, where most men pretend so much to illumination, as able to strip, and uncase every good thing from beneath the abuse thereof; those that are in place may be pleased to consider, if it be not time to work upon our consciences, and take it further to thought, if the abusing of our selves through want of confession, exceed not those abuses wherewith it was formerly beset. It belongeth onely to me freely, and with the conscience of a Divine to examine, upon what necessity Confession standeth, and how far it may concern us.

*Abyssum ingredior Quæstionum, nesciens, Deus scit, quæ evasurus.*  
Bern.

*Necessarium triplex*

1. *Stabile.*
2. *Inviolabile.*
3. *Incommutabile.*

And the better to come by that, we shall arrest our selves awhile upon such discourses, as judicious Writers have left concerning necessity, and the several kinds thereof, that we may see our way before us; and though I plunge my self into the depth of Questions, yet my scope being to enquire after truth, my hope is (*God* being my Pilot, and his *Word* my Compass) to arrive safely in the Haven.

Saint Bernard in that excellent Treatise of his of *Precepts*, and *Dispensation*, sets his whole discourse upon a threefold necessity; 1. *stable*; 2. *inviolable*; 3. *incommutable*. That is said with him to be *stable* and *firm*, which may not be abrogated by any, but by the *Dispensers* of the *Mysteries* of *God*; such are *authentick Canons*, and *Ecclesiastical institutes*; which because decreed from holy men, that

*Stabile ita necessarium est, quod non cuilibet hominum illud mutare fas sit, nisi solis Dispensatoribus Mysteriorum Dei, i. e. Prepositis, authenticis Canonibus, & Ecclesiastica instituta dignæ autoritatis.*

had power & authority from *God* so to do, cannot be antiquated but by men of like place and authority. Instituted they were, not

as if the Church could not be without them, but because they apprehended she could not do so well without them; the end whereof was the preservation of peace and charity; and the rule for continuance is, *whilest they make and fight for charity, they are to abide in full force*: Nor are they to be antiquated, but by men endowed with equal authority at the least, to the first

Enactors; nor except they be found to make, and march against charity; and then it is but meet for charity to revoke that constitution, which for Charities sake was ordained. Otherwise where no necessity is (saith Leo) by no means may the institutions of holy Fathers be violated. And this the Father rules *vix immutabile*, hardly to be changed; for they onely can do it that are in place, and that by a provident dispensation. The second kind of Necessity he termeth inviolable;

which is not delivered from man, but promulgated from God, and never to be altered but by God himself. Such are the Precepts of the second Table, wherewithall no mortal man may dispense, but God may and can when he please; as with the Hebrews, to spoil the Egyptians in borrowing, and not restoring; although Clemens Alexan-

drinus justifies their doings herein, as but exacting from the Egyptians what duly belonged unto them; viz. the detained wages *μεροί*. Strom. of a tedious servitude. Thus Sampson pulled down the house upon lib. 1. pag. his own, and the Philistines head: of such attempts Saint Ber-

nards rule is, If holy men break forth into acts contrary to Gods law, either we must confess they sinned as men, or believe they received special direction from God as Prophets.

And this necessity is almost

*Non quia aliter vivere non liceret, sed quod ita magis expediret, nec planè ad aliud quam ad lucrum & custodiam charitatis.*

*Quandiu charitati militant, immobiliter fixa sunt.*

*Nonne iustissimum esse liquet, ut quæ pro charitate inventa fuerunt, pro charitate quoque, ubi expedire videtur, vel omittantur, vel in aliud fortè commodius demutentur? Bernard. tract. de Præcept. & Dispens.*

*Ubi necessitas non est, nullo modo sanctorum Patrum instituta violantur. Leo apud Bernard.*

*Vix mutabile esse constat, dum solis illud liceat mutare Prelatis; & hoc non nisi fidelis & provida dispensatione.*

2.

*Inviolabile, non ab homine traditum, sed divinitus promulgatum; Nisi à Deo qui tradidit, mutari omnino non patitur; Dominus tamen horum, quod voluit, & quando voluit, solvit.*

*Aut eos peccasse satendum est sicut homines, aut certè sicut Prophetas familiare Dei consilium accepisse.*

almost

Penē jam incommutabile, soli quippe Deo mutabile.

3.

Quod divina ita constat, & aeterna ratione firmatum, ut nulla ex causa possit vel ab ipso Deo aliquatenus immutari. — hec quippe talia sunt que nec liceat, nec expediat aliquando non haberi. — omni tempore, omni persone mortem contempta, custodita salutem operantur.

Omnino incommutabile.

Certum est potuisse Deum sine ullis Sacramentis homines iustificare, neque de hoc ulla controversia est. Bellar. de Sacram. in genere, l. 1. c. 22. Sect. Sit igitur.

almost unchangeable, because this is the change of the Lords right hand only. The third is *immutab'le*, so ratified upon divine and eternal reason, that God himself cannot alter the same, as implying contradiction. Of this nature are the contents of the Lords Sermon in the Mount; and whatsoever precepts of charity, humility, meekness, &c. are extant in holy

writ; which bind all persons, and at all times, and upon the greatest hazard. And this law truly is, (what was vainly said of the Medes and Persians) that cannot be altered, and is unchangeable altogether. These ground works being laid, let us briefly make the application. I say then, that no Divine hath ever arrogated this last, and *incommutab'le necessity* unto auricular Confession, as a duty of that worth, and so requisite, as God himself could not dispense with it, nor be able to save without it.

There is not so great necessity thereof, as of Baptisme; Yet it is certain (saith Bellarmine) that God is able to justify men without any Sacraments at all, and hereof there is no controver-

sie. Away then with that necessity which is *ex natura rei*, as if confession were such in it self, that God could not do without it. And for the first necessity, as a matter of *Canonical institution* imposed by the Church, no Divine, (except altogether a stranger to antiquity) will deny. Let it then go for a *Church-Constitution*, continue it must, and a necessity of obedience is required, till the same appear unto the Church to be destructive of charity, or tranquillity; and by the same authority be abolished, by which it was at first prescribed; and for the second how far necessary as an Ordinance Divine, and in what sense it may be said to be ordained by God, I must send back my Reader to the former Section, where the point is stated.

We will tread the footsteps of necessity in the Schoolmens path, and



Pre-  
cepti.  
Neces-  
sitas  
Me-  
dii.  
I.

and see what will result from thence; with them necessity is twofold; 1. As a necessary *Precept*, 2. or a needful *mean*. Now every just command is grounded upon some reason, and every lawful mean conduceth to some good. In *Divine Precepts* we are not scrupulous to enquire after the *Cause*, or *Reason* thereof, but where Gods pleasure is to set it down; for with us his will passeth for a cause all-sufficient. So then it is necessary to salvation to obey all Gods commands, or to repent for the disobedience; although all his divine *Precepts* conduce not necessarily thereunto. At the sacking of *Jericho* the spoils were devoted to the Lord, and the Israelites might reserve nothing to themselves; a necessity there lay in obeying the same, though the commandment it self was not so necessary. In the *old Law* (as I shewed before) there was a *precept* for Confession; and in the *new*, a *president* for the same; why should it not then be thought necessary? But take this along with you; *Positive Precepts* contained in the *Scripture* are not to be extended further than the written *Word*, or intention of the Law-giver direct: for example, God intendeth pardon upon sincere confession of the sin committed; which Pardon when it may be had upon confession made unto God himself, we extend it not unto *Man*. So again, if it may be procured upon a general confession before man, we urge not the Delinquent to be particular; but if the Conscience cannot be pacified except the punitive sin be discovered, in that case we require a special detection of that sin by name. So then if the intended pardon may be compassed by any of these wayes, that way is to be reputed necessary for that penitent, which served the turn. If by none, but by all of these, all of these then are necessary. Moreover, Gods word commandeth sins to be discovered to the Priest in termes absolute, without further circumstance; we dare not therefore extend that precept to the manner thereof; whether it should be publick or private, of all sins, or some, followed with remorse of Conscience; and whether with the addition of aggravating circumstances or no. I say we lay no necessity of these cases upon any, because we have not any express word for our warrant; we counsel onely, that no man permit sin to lie still in his bosome, so long as he

Joſh. 6. 18.

feels pain, but complain still to his Physician, till the cure be perfect. Thus for the necessity of Precept.

2. The second branch is *necessitas medii*. And we are to judge of that necessity by the end; for no *mean* can be of greater necessity than the *end* for which it serveth; and if the *end* be found necessary, the *mean* must be thought to be so, and in *means* we are to enquire if the proposed *end* may be attained by *one* onely *mean*, or by *divers*; some means may be *useful*, but not *necessary*, as a horse for a journey, or *simply* necessary as wings to flie. To apply, remission of sins is the end a Penitent proposeth to himself, which to compass, we say that confession to a Priest is not of absolute necessity, as the adequate, & only mean; for faith in Christ (who onely hath deserved it) is also required; nor a necessary *concurrent* mean; for of faith I read, but never of Auricular Confession; that without faith it is impossible to please God; but onely a *conditional mean*, and so the necessity thereof *hypothetical*, in some cases of Conscience to be instanced hereafter: for sin in no case may be remitted without God, in many without man. But if we take confession as a *medium utile*, in that sense we shall ever approve thereof, although we resolve confession in it self not to be of absolute necessity for all, but a precept binding some sinners, and for some special sins onely. As the holy *Eucharist* is a Sacrament of divine institution, and singular benefit, necessary to some Christians, and at some times, and the contempt thereof at all times damnable; though in it self not simply necessary, nor at all times, nor to be imposed upon all persons without discretion, *ps. i. iiii.*, then, for all that can be said this, Confession challengeth not any such necessity in it self as inherent in the same, or any way belonging of sovereign virtue and necessary use; but as a condition

supposed for the acquiring of some necessary good, *viz.* forgiveness of sins, and reconciliation; a penitent taking all good courses to ingratiate himself into the favour of God; and this is onely conditional necessity, and by way of consequence; and so far to be urged as we shall

*Necessitas conditionalis, seu necessitas consequentia, non est absoluta, nec competit subiecto ex natura rei: sed solum consequitur ad talem suppositionem, vel conditionem, ex qua necessario inferitur id quod ex tali conditione dicitur necessarium necessitate secundum quid, licet absolute, & secundum se est liberum contingens.* Alvarca de Auxil. 3. Disp. 12. n. 40.

shall find it a cause to promote the same; and further we neither require nor urge it. And amiss it cannot be that shall promote so good an end; nor superfluous that advanceth such a purpose, nor a heavy burden that brings so happy a benefit.

# S E C T. III.

## The Contents.

*Scrupulous enumeration of all sins decreed in late Councils. Circumstances aggravating, and altering the property of sin, Mill-stones to plain-people. Anxious inquisition into each sin, with every circumstance a perplexed piece. Particular reckonings for every sin a heavy load to the Conscience, and without express warranty from God, implying difficulty, and impossibility, and tending to desperation. No urgent necessity to be so superstitious in casting up of all sins, and the circumstantial tails thereof. Romish clasets of Confession seminaries of sin, and uncleanness. Venial and reserved sins exempted by Rome from the ears of ordinary Priests, upon what grounds. Strict and specifick enumeration of sins but of late standing in the Church. General Interrogatories proposed at the hour of death from Anselme. Some sins are specially, and by name to be rehearsed in Confession. The nature, and quality of those sins described, and determined.*

**W**E are now come unto the Contents of Confession, namely sins; and hence a difference springeth betwixt us and Rome about the extent, and latitude thereof: Whether forsooth all, and every sin committed after Baptisme, together

with every aggravating circumstance following every sin be to be laid at the Priests feet; and whether such an institution of such a Confession comprising all sins, together with their remarkable circumstances to be spread before the Priest upon necessity of salvation, be not *circa Crux*, a torture and snare unto the conscience, and the practice hereof render the Conscience more perplexed, than the sin it self. We shall do well herein to see what the Church of *Rome* holdeth, and what load she laith upon her *profelytes*, and under what pretences. The *La-*

*Omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter, saltem semel in anno, proprio Sacerdoti. Conc. Lat. sub Innocent. 3. can. 21.*

*Ad oris confessionem pertinet, ut peccator omnia peccata quorum memoriam habeat, suo Sacerdoti confitatur integraliter, &c. Concil. Florent. in doctrin. de Sacram.*

*teran Council*, where their Confession first came abroad, decreed all sins to be confessed faithfully at least once a year unto their own Priest. The *Flarentine Council* prescribes a sinner to confess wholly all such sins as he remembereth to his Priest, as loth to charge him with more than he bears in mind; and if such time be given as once a year, and of such sins as occur to the memory; it may well be doubted, that with many sinners but few remain upon the memory at the years end, to be rehearsed before the Priest. And if all sins are so much to be stood upon in Confession, it is much to be marvelled that these *Councils* should trust so fraile a memory as a sinners is, especially with such records as he takes no pleasure to preserve, and that for so long a space; and be so strict for the account, and so loose for the time, where many a particular may be obliterated and defaced. The *Fathers at Trent* de-

*Oportere à Penitentibus omnia peccata mortalia, quorum post diligentem sui discussionem, conscientiam habent, in confessione recenseri, etiamsi occultissima illa sint, & tantum adversus duo ultima Decalogi præcepta commissa; Quæ nonnunquam animum gravius lauciant, & periculosa sunt iis quæ in manifesto admittuntur — omnia quæ memorie occurrunt peccata confiteri student. Qui secus faciunt, & scienter aliqua retinent, nihil divine bonitatis per Sacerdotem remittendum proponunt.*

cree no less, viz. That all and every sin must be repeated in Confession; that diligent and narrow search must be made into the Conscience, especially after those secret sins that are against the two last commandments (they mean the last it self) of the Decalogue, as wounding the soul oftentimes more dangerously, than such that are openly committed; that all persons be studious in making confession of those sins which

obscure

occurre unto their memory; assuring a' those that do otherwise, and sciently keep in any sin, to look for no remission from Gods goodness at the Priests hand. Here the memory must be help'd with diligent disquisition and study to sift after not aſual ſins alone, but the moſt retired offences of the heart, as many times implying greateſt danger, or elſe no pardon may be expected either from God, or from the Priest; what breſt will not be diſquieted with this ſcrupulous command, and not terrified at this fearful penalty? I have ſearched, but ſear me not narrowly enough; have been ſtudious to remember, but not ſo careful as I ought; have look'd into my heart, but perceive that's a depth not to be fathomed, would gladly know what ſecret ſins lurke there, but find it ſo deceitful above all things that who can know it? Thus the Conſcientious Penitent diſtruſts his confeſſion not to be completely made, and can never thereby aſſure himſelf of Priſtly abſolution. That Council yet proceeds, and commands all circumſtances altering the nature of the ſin to be unfolded alſo. Nor doth their Catechiſme ſet out by Papall authority differ from their Council, which teacheth, All and ſingular deadly ſins to be numbred up, although they lie hid never ſo cloſely, of which kind are thoſe that are forbidden in the two laſt commandments of the law; for it often happeneth, that ſuch as they wound the ſoul more, then thoſe which men are wont to commit in the open view; and not ſins alone, but the circumſtances thereof muſt be brought within Confeſſion. Not only ſins of weight themſelves, but ſuch things alſo which ſeverally beſet them, and greatly increaſe, or diminish the iniquity thereof; for ſome circumſtances are ſo material, that from them alone is collected the deadlineſs of the offence.

And the ſharp and ſevere penalty for the omitting thereof is laid.

*Colligitur præterea etiam circumſtantiæ eas in confeſſione explicandas eſſe, quæ ſpeciem peccati mutant. Conc. Trid. Sels. 14. c. 5.*

*Mortifera peccata ſingula enumeranda ſunt; quamvis etiam occultiffimè lateant, ut epus generis ſint, quæ diobus tantum extremis decalogi capitibus interdicuntur; Sæpe enim evenit, ut ea gravius animum vulnerent, quàm illa quæ apertè & palam peccare homines ſolent. Catech. Rom. pag. 157.*

*Neque ſolum peccata gravia narrando explicare oportet, verum etiam illa quæ unumquodq; peccatum circumſtant, præter tatem valde augent, vel minuant. Quedam enim circumſtantiæ adeo graves ſunt, ut peccati mortiferi ratio ex illis totum conſtat. p. 157. 2.*

*Si quis dedita opera alia quidem ex iis que explicari debeant pretermittat, alia vero tantummodo confiteatur; non solum ex ea confessione is commodum nullum consequatur, sed etiam scelere novo se obstringit.* Catech. ad Paroch. Fii V. jussu editi. Paris. 1567.

laid down in that *Chatechisme* thus; *If any willingly pretermitt, and pass over to confess any of the sins, or circumstances thereunto belonging as he ought, & so confess but a part, and parcel thereof; he shall be so far from reaping any benefit under colour of such confession, as to engage himself to a further sin.* Here comes in that intolerable burden, and hard yoke, the remembrance wherof makes tender and bleeding consciences to tremble; that upon the omission of any sin, or circumstantial rag thereof (and tender consciences will ever suspect they have done it wittingly) after all their pains in remembring, grief in reciting, and shame in discovering their other faults, are so far from landing in the quiet haven of absolution after many tempests sustained, as they are imbarqu'd to a further danger, and depart worse sinners than they came; besides the discomfort in drawing a particular catalogue of all sins, when we have work enough to be eased of those which lie heavy at the heart.

I said how the *Masters* at *Trent* decreed such circumstances of sin to be unfolded, which changed the kind; and their meaning is further to be unfolded, that their cat-throat doctrine

*Circumstantiæ sunt in duplici differentia; aliæ minuētes, aliæ verò aggravantes: rursus vel mutant speciem; ut furtum in loco sacro; vel non, ut furtum 100. aureorum; idem in specie ac furtum 10. aureorum. Canus.*

may be more manifest. There are two sorts of circumstances, 1. *diminishing*, and 2. *aggravating* the offence; and these latter are again twofold, 1. *either which change the species of sin, as to rob the Church is not theft, but Sacrilege*; 2. *or else which aggravate only, as to steal a 100. l. or a 100. s. is theft alike, though not alike was stolen*; and an example of 1. *diminishing circumstances*, 2. *or changing mortal sin into venial*; as to communicate ignorantly with a person excommunicate; that word *ignorantly* shews the offence to be but venial. Now their rules herein are these; 1. *Circumstances abating the sin from mortal to venial, are to be expressed*. 2. *Circumstances diminishing the sin, yet leaving the same*

1. *Circumstantia quæ ita minuit peccatum, ut ex mortali faciat veniale, debeat omnino explicari.*

2. *Si circumstantia minuant peccati malitiam, intra tam'n latitudinem peccati mortalis, non est necessarium illas consecari.*



to be mortal, are not so much to be stood upon in confession. 3. Circumstances

adding new malice, and changing the species of sin, are precisely requisite in confession, as the rape of a Nun, or

cloistred Virgin; a Frier-like sin. Now in good earnest, what are such circumstantial distinctions to the people, but scruples to perplex their Consciences, or rocks to grind them to powder? and if their Casuists alwayes versed in these points, are restless in their resolutions, how shall the vulgar, but little or nothing at all studied in such cases, discern what circumstances are fit to be put in and out in their Confessions?

This is the publick doctrine of the Church of Rome, and which her adherents and followers with no less superciliousness

averte. If any of the Saints (saith Bishop Fisher) had wittingly concealed the least mortal sin that came into their mind at the instant of Confession, I dare be bold to say they were neither Saints, nor justified; yea, if they had attained to any Righteousness before, to have wholly lost it through their hypocrisie.

Great grace is conferred no doubt by this noble Sacrament, environ'd with so many scruples and difficulties, that the Penitent is in greater danger to lose the good he hath, than in hope to augment it. It is not certainly without cause that Luther, who knew the practice thereof, cried out upon it, as Carni-

ficina cruentissima, wherewithal popish shavelings have tortured so many consciences by the discussions and confessions of all and singular offences; imposing importable burdens upon men through their tyranny, without any god, or particle of holy Scripture. And a Reverend Prelate of our own, (these tyrannous abuses considered) to censure Romish confession for the necessity,

cinium voluptatis: ex istac lege non prodenti futura peccata proditorum fligiosisarum latebram atq; sigillum. Reverend. Episc. Dunelm. in Caus. Regia, cap. 7. Sect. 2. and

3. Circumstantia mutantes Speciem, & ex nova specie, novam peccato mortalem militiam adicientes, sunt omnino explicande; ut stuprum cum virgine Deo sacra. Can. Rel. de Pœn. part. 6. p. 906.

Si sancti vel minimum mortale quod menti occurrisset, tempore confessionis sponte subissent, ausim dicere nec sanctos eos esse, nec iustificatos; immo si quam antè justitiam habuissent, jam propter hypocrisim penitus amiserunt. Roffens. Contr. Luther. art. 8.

Ista est Carnificina cruentissima quâ battentur tot miseras conscientias torquent omnium & singulorum peccatorum discussionibus & confessionibus, cum pro se non ioca habeant ullius Scripturæ, tyrannide propriâ hæc onera importabilia hominibus imponentes. Luther. art. 9.

Summa est, Confessionem auricularem per multiplices Pontificiorum abusus sepe factam jam esse, ex necessitate, & circumstantiarum perplexitate conscientiarum Carnificinam: ex formulis interrogationum illecebram & lenocinium voluptatis: ex istac lege non prodenti futura peccata proditorum fligiosisarum latebram atq; sigillum. Reverend. Episc. Dunelm. in Caus. Regia, cap. 7. Sect. 2. and

Bishop Usher's  
Answer to the  
Jesuites chal-  
lenge, p. 124.

and perplexity of circumstances, the rack of the Conscience; for and he formes of interrogatories therein administred, the bait band of voluptuousness; and for silencing of future sins, the den and seal of prodigious treasons. Thus he; and how sharp soever this censure be, sad experience justifies the truth hereof; and a no less Reverend, and learned personage to stile this particular and circumstantial enumeration of sins, that Engine whereby the Priests of Rome have lift up themselves into that height of domineering, and tyrannizing over mens consciences, wherewith we see they now hold the poor people in most miserable aw; and lest these Men be thought to be more rigid in their judgments? than Rome in her confession, let a moderate man, an Angel,

*Quod subiciunt Augustanæ confessionis Authores, enumerationem omnium delictorum non esse necessariam, quadam ex parte rectè habet, v. z. si intelligatur de ignotis, & non occurrentibus peccatis; item si intelligatur de nimis anxâ inquisitione omnium circumstantialium, quæ in multis conscientiarum carnificinam gignit, quam nemo moderatus approbat: Verùm si referatur ad eam enumerationem peccatorum, quâ graviora omnia peccata diligenter expenduntur, & tanquam spiritualia vulnera spirituali Medico revelantur, de ea quoque retinenda dubitandum non est. Cassand. Consult. art. 11. Lugd. 1612.*

that fled through the midst of heaven, leaving the Reformed Church above him, and the Roman below, Cassander speak; whereas the Authors of the Augustane Confession add, that an enumeration of all sins is not so necessary, in some sense it is well; namely, if unknown sins, and such as occur not, be understood; also if that same anxious inquisition into all circumstances be meant, which in many begets a torture of conscience, which no moderate man can approve of. But if it be referred to that enumeration of sins, wherein

the more grievous offences are diligently weighed, and are revealed, as spiritual wounds to a spiritual Physician, there can be no question but that it ought to be retained. Hereunto may be added, B. Rhenanus, who could not away with this morosity, and scrupulosity (as he calls it) though otherwise, the duty it self (those abuses cut off) is by him highly exalted.

*Quam confessionem saluberrimam esse nemo possit inficiari, si morositatem, & scrupulositatem nimiam amputes. B. Rhen. prefat. ad Tert. lib. de Poenit.*

I. Our exceptions against the same follow; and first we challenge them for shutting the kingdome of heaven before men; and imposing harder conditions than the most indulgent times under the Gospel, and grace approve of. We live under a continual jubile, and may have access unto the mercy-seat with confidence;

Enumeration of  
all sins before  
the Priest, a bur-  
den importable,  
and besides  
Gods word.

confidence; but by this doctrine the Gospel is turned into the Law; and the light yoke become a heavy burthen; and the condition of the *second* covenant of *Grace* more precise, then the *first* of *works*, it being possible alike to perform all the precepts of the Law, and circumstances thereof, as distinctly to confess all our sins, and the circumstances. Moreover, who can well endure such hard load to be laid upon the Conscience, and so sorely pressed without special warranty from Gods word? *Luther* charged the *Pope* with this tyrannical imposition, without any shadow of authority from holy writ. *Bishop Fisher* confesseth the charge in part to be true, if *Leo X.* then *Pope* had been the first bringer in thereof; but he dischargeth him, and laith it upon the most ancient, learned and holiest Authors, and that not without testimonies from the Scripture. That *Prelate* saith it, but he or some for him must shew it, else his assertion will prove a scandal to those ancient and learned worthies. *Tam apertissime tradita*, a thing so evident, and we so blind that cannot see it? sure too much transparency of light hath dazled us. We would gladly know for our reverence to ancient learning. where not onely any, but any one of those Ancients have delivered, that all sins with their circumstances are upon pain of salvation to be distinctly confessed to a Priest, and that by exprefs order from the Word of God. This doctrine of the Church of *Rome* is *jans* parallel to any passage of Scripture, or testimony of any Father. *Bellarmine* (its a chance else) would have lighted upon those ancient Records, if any such had been extant; who of the old Councils saith thus; *The testimonies of the Councils which we all age, although they do not clearly contain confession to be of divine right; nevertheless they contain an ancient custome, and oft times shew the necessity of confessing unto a Priest.* The contents of this testimony can afford but small comfort; and

B b

for

*Si res hæc fuisset ab hoc Pontifice nuper inventa, potuisses illam & multò quidem inculpatus, ejus imputasse tyrannidi; verum cum à vetustissimis, & eisdem eruditissimis, atq; sanctissimis authoribus, nec sine Scripturarum testimoniis apertissime traditum sit, frustra tyrannidem ejus accusas. pag. 146.*

*Testimonia Conciliorum quæ adferemus, etiamsi non apertè contineant confessionem esse juris divini, continent tamen antiquam consuetudinem, & sæpè etiam indicant necessitatem confitendi Sacerdoti. Bell. l. 3. de Pœn. cap. 5.*

for the *Fathers* the same man saith thus ; *Although the Fathers*

*Tametsi Patres (quos citat Chemnitius) non dicant disertis verbis confessionem omnium peccatorum necessariam esse jure divino ; tamen neque disertis verbis dicunt confessionem omnium peccatorum non esse necessariam jure divino.* Id. ib. cap. 11.

*say not in express words, Confession of all sins to be necessary by divine right, so neither do they say in express words that confession of all sins is not necessary by divine right.* 'Tis true he saith these words of such *Fathers* as are produced by *Chemnitius*, (which are

in effect all that are alleaged by himself, as by collation may appear.) And a negative proof from authority will be thought too slack to prove a positive doctrine ; and in *Schools* too weak an argument ; *Confession is necessary by divine Law, because the Fathers say not to the contrary.* Affirmative conclusions urged *de fide*, and upon the extremest penalty ; must be deduced from positive and clear testimonies, else their credit may be worthily suspected ; and how defective this particular is in proofs, I appeal to all *Pontificious* Writers, and indifferent Readers ;

*conclusionem Mathematicâ demonstratione planè exploratam haberi non posse; afferuntur argumenta quæ probant consentanum esse, ita fieri oportere.* Canus Relect. de pœn. part. 6. pag. 902.

yea, *Canus* confesseth that this conclusion, viz. for the confessing of every particular sin, cannot be found out by any *Mathematical* demonstration; but saith being supposed, such arguments must be trusted unto, which prove it

convenient so to be. How comes it then to pass that this point is concluded to be necessary, where the arguments it stands upon prove it onely convenient ? and why should that be exposed to be performed upon utmost peril, which is at the most but probably confirmed ? Precise Conclusions *de fide* must rest upon sure foundations, and where salvation, and damnation is set upon the head of any precept, the same must be evidenced with a *constat quod erat demonstrandum*, as certainly as any *Mathematical* demonstration.

2.  
Enumeration  
of every sin a  
matter of im-  
possibility.

Our second exception is the impossibility in rendering so exact an account of every sin, with the appendix of several circumstances. That Law is rejected as *Tyrannical*, or *foolish*, that injoyneth impossibilities. It is impy to affirm the precepts of

Ἀσεβὲς ἔν

ἀέρεν ἀδύνατα εἶναι τὰ τῷ πνεύματι προσγεγνημένα. *Basil hom. 19. 3.*

the

the holy Spirit to be impossible, saith great Basil. To confess always before we come to the Communion, is oftentimes (saith the learned Bishop now of Norwich) a matter of impossibility to do; even impossible to do with particular enumeration of each sin, and special circumstance in each sin. Aquinas, and Scotus,

Bishop Montagu appeal, pag. 301.

(saith Beatus Rhenanus) two, and too subtle disputants, have brought confession to such a pass at this day, that John Geiller, a grave and holy Divine, often testified unto his friends, that according to their rigid observances it is impossible to make Confession. So by these mens inventions, and curious injunctions (to say no more) that which was at first an ease to relieve, is now become a snare to intrap the conscience.

Ignorant and importunate Physicians (saith Cassander) casting snares upon the peoples consciences, which they ought to unwrap, and set at liberty.

Aquinas & Scotus homines nimium arguti, confessionem hodie talem reddiderunt, ut Jo-an. Geillerius, gravis & Sanctus Theologus, apud suos sepe testatus sit, ut secundum illorum d' utroque, impossibile est confiteri. Arg. in Tert. de Pœnit.

And so it must needs be, for our sins are as numberless as the sands; and though we should be as exact computists as Clavius was who hath cast up into one summe how many graines of sands will fill up the vast concave betwixt earth and heaven, we may be out in our account of sin:

Ignavi & importuni Medici conscientias hominum quas extricare & levare debeant, laqueos injiciunt. Cassand. Con. art. 11.

We must not (saith Canus) put them that sin often to their Arithmetick, to bring in an exact number of their offences. It is an harsh, but true proposition, that it is scarce possible for those which confess but once a year, to recount the true number of their offences.

Non oportere eos qui sepe peccant ad Mathematicos numeros peccatorum multitudinem exactè redigere, difficilis sanè propositio sed vera; quia vix possibile est iis qui semel in anno confitentur, certum numerum peccatorum recensere. Canus supra.

To this end David prayed as well to number his sins, as his dayes, and was (I suppose) as scrupulous to confess, and lament them, as any of our Roman Penitents; yet he cries out, Who can understand his errors? cleanse me from my secret sins; and again, My iniquities are gone over my head, as a burden they are too heavy for me. Now truly he well understood how great a depth of sins there is, how many strange countenances and shapes they resemble; how

Psal. 19. 12.

Psal. 38. 5.

abyssus; quæ in multa scelerum facies, quot capita ferret, & quam longam caudam traheret hec Hydra. Calvin. Institut. 1.3.c. 4. Sect. 16.

many

many heads they lift up; and how great a traine, and long tail of circumstances this Hydra draweth after it. Therefore he busieth not himself in drawing an Inventory of each severall sin; but cries out of the depth unto the Lord, that the waters have entred into his soul; that his sins are too heavy; that there is no health in his bones, nor rest in his conscience: and in such termes spreads his sins before the Lord by better expressions than in any Method or formes of Confession, (and thereof are diverse) set forth by our New Masters. I must not forget that Popish writers streitned with the pressure of this reason, remit something

*Ea solum que post diligentem excussione[m] memoria[m] occurrunt.* Bellar. de Pœn. l. 3. cap. 16.

of the rigour, and exact no further account than of such sins occurring unto the memory, and seriously called to mind at the time of Confession; and

how poor a remnant this is, to the sands of the Sea, and how small a gleanings after so great a harvest; that handful reserved for that time maketh manifest. Confess all and every sin is the precept; that is, such onely as you can remember, is the exception; a gentle glosse for a severe Law: and as the injunction it self is too rigorous, so the limitation is too ridiculous. The Gracian Dame defiled by the Deacon in Sozomen, confessed her sin *κατὰ μέγεθος*, which I read rather distinctly than partially; and so used by Clemens Alexandrinus, viz. the doctrine of Christ deduceth providence unto things in singular; yet a distinct confession of sin differeth from a distinct confession of all sins, and a sinner may be particular in some, though not singular in all offences, a matter (as we said) of impossibility.

Τὴν πρῶτον, μέγεθος κατὰ μέγεθος ἀγχι. Strom. I. p. 217. lin. 11.

3.  
Obligation of confessing sins all and singular, a point of desperation.

*utque ad circumstantiarum minutias.*

Our third exception, that to oblige the conscience to confess every sin with the pertinent circumstance is a doctrine of desperation; for confess I must all my sins, else look for no comfort from Gods hands, and the Priests. Now what soul can tell he hath told all his sins? Thou wilt say, tell all thou art able, do thy best endeavour to lay open all, and then though some are left out, thou art discharged. I do my best, and part my sins into branches, fractions, atomes; I weigh the nature, and extent thereof; I put thereunto every material circumstance; I lanch forth into the depth of my lewd life, and having nothing before but the open air, and vast sea, no haven, no station, and



and the further I enter into this *Labyrinth*, the more I lose my self; and the more diligent I am to number sins, the more numberless I find them; and after all my travel in this disquisition, my conscience is not quieted, my Audit is not perfect, therefore much suspect

*Herbam inter Saxum & sacrum, nec alius tandem exitus reperiebatur quam desperatio.*  
Calv. in fitil. l. 3. c. 4. Sect. 17.

I shall not have my *quietus est* at the Priests hands; such thoughts as these must needs present themselves to that soul whose conscience is kept awake. Furthermore it is required of all penitents to use *such diligence, to keep their sins in memory against the times of Confession, as usually they do about such important affairs as otherwise much concern them*; and here arise new doubts, and discontent in the mind, whereby a Penitent is jealous he hath not done his *devoir*, especially when he calls to mind, what diligence he hath shewed in accomplishing secular ends, how careful he is in the things of this life; studious of his preferment, watchful to prevent dangers, painful to augment his store, provident in laying up for his posterity; all which matched with the diligence he hath used on this behalf, what restless perturbations ensue? herein I took not time enough, I used not industry enough, I let slip many sins through negligence, and forgot more through my carelessness; and shall such negligent forgetfulness be excused? I said above what *Beatus Rhemanus* related from a Divine of much experience, concerning the impossibility of confession; let us hear him further about the perplexity, and torture thereof. *Many religions*

*Diligentem excussioem vocant, quam in rebus gravioribus ordinariè homines adhibere solent.*  
Bellar. l. 3. de Pœnit. c. 16.

*Carthusians and Franciscans were very conversant with him, from them he perceived with what torments well-disposed people were afflicted about confession, which scruples (as it seemed unto them) they could not satisfy; the like complaint did the (a) Vestal Vir-*

*Virille magno rerum usu præditus — à Carthusianis, & Franciscanis interviscebatur, ab his disciebat quibus tormētis quorundam pie meates affligerentur ob confessionem, cui satisfacere (ut ipsis videbatur) nequirent; similes querelas ad eum deferrebant sanctimoni-ales; proinde motus fuerat ut libellum ederet in lingua Germanica, cui titulum fecit VON*

DEM BEICHTUNAH, hoc est, de morbo Confessionis, quo negabant esse tristior. m qui eo torcebantur: Erat Carthusianus quidam, qui propter confessionem, que ei semper ob inapplicabilem circumstantiarum vim imperfecta videbatur, sed ipse perfectissimam esse frustra contendebat, huc miseriarum venerat, ut omnem salutem desponderet, & ἀποκαθάρσις cogitaret; hujusmodi homines illi sibi eo libello consolari. B. Rhenan. præf. ad Tert. l. de. Pœnit.,

(a) We call them Nuns being for the most part Nonaræ; of whom the Poet — Mul-  
tūm gaudere paratus, Si Cynico barbam petulaas Nonaria vellat, Pers. Sat.

gins and Potaries make unto him, Whereupon he was moved to publish a Treatise in the German tongue, which he entituled, VON BEICHTUNAH, that is, the diseafe of Confession, than which those that were visited with the same, confessed none to be more grievous. There was a certain Carthusian, all long of confession, which by reason of the unexplicable violence of circumstances appeared to him as imperfect, (although he did his best endeavour to perfect the same all he could) who was driven to that wretched exigence, as to despair of salvation, and contrive his own death by as-famishment; such distressed persons he was pleased to relieve in that Treatise. A sight whereof I have much desired, but could not yet compass, and therefore have put down this testimony more at length than otherwise I would. And not in the judgement of this Divine alone, but of their greatest Angelical Doctor, this superstitious, and circumstantial relation of each sin hath produced such sad and desperate events; For as Navarr

*Ipse Aquinas circumstantiarum torturas sensisse videtur, & arbitratur candido Christi lectori conformiorem esse confessionem, quae tranquillo animo sine circumstantiis, bonâ fide facta est, quam quae his fit animo scrupuloso, & inquieto. Navar. Tom. 1. p. 501.*

that great Casuist witnesseth; Aquinas himself seemed sensible of these wringings and tortures of circumstances; and reputed that Confession more comfortable for an innocent breast, where Christ abideth, which is made with a quiet mind, and good intention,

than that which proceedeth from a scrupulous and unquiet heart. Insomuch that Divines of best account in that side have greatly disliked these squeezing, and writhing interrogatories, serving for no other end but to fish and angle after secrets, neither necessary nor fit to come abroad, and condemn those late Summists that prescribe the form thereof; wishing their Treatises to be bestowed otherwise than in Libraries, as serving forsooth to deliver the art, and method of a business which skills not much — and desire that honest hearts may not be defrauded of due comfort; lest the tyrannie and torture of Conscience prevail too much, and as much hurt be done by such severity, as by licentiousness; and advise, that moderation herein be shewn.

*Non difficilis confessio, sed morositas ista & anxietas quorundam, quam docent aliquae recentiorum Summulae, quae iustius alicubi locum habcant quam in Bibliothecis, hoc est, nimirum artem tradere, & methodum alicujus rei quam ipse non probe calleat. — bone mentes non sunt debito solatio destituenda, ne tyrannis, & Carnificina conscientiarum invaleseat, haud paulo minus nocitura, quam dissolutio; adeo modum ubiq; servari praestat. B. Rhenan. supra.*

that moderation herein be shewn. The

The Cardinal pressed with the weight of this argument, finds no ease but by retorting the same upon those heads that brought it; thus: If enumeration of all sins be impossible before men, then it is so also before God; and Protestants require sinners to confess unto God whatsoever sins they know, or remember, and Papists require no more in auricular confession, both then must lie open to like exceptions: if it be

said that special Confession made before man is impossible, so is that before God also; if this a torture, then that also; if this lead to desperation, then that likewise. Thus the Jesuit glories to have wounded us with our own weapon. But it will not so easily be wrung from us; for we reply; first, God requireth not so strict an account at our hands as the Priest doth, neither inflicteth so strait a charge upon the Conscience as the Popish law. God rested satisfied, and the Publican remaineth justified upon that general confession, and supplication, *O God be merciful to me a sinner.* 2. Again, in making confession to God, the Lord may bring our sins to remembrance, *I will set them in order before thee*; which the Priest cannot do. 3. Furthermore, God searcheth the heart, which the Priest cannot enter into; hears the desires thereof, which the Priest cannot; and understands the voice of our weeping, which the Priest is ignorant of; and tears are a Penitents best Interpreter; *more profitable are the prayers sighed forth in tears, than uttered in words*; our speech may fail in expression, but tears never fail. Our speech oft times doth not fully open our case, but tears ever open our affections fully. Ambros. If then a Penitent have a better dialect spreading his sins better before God, than if he spake with the tongue of men and Angels; and such a dialect which neither Men nor Angels understand but God himself, viz. the voice of weeping; the argument must return in full force, and there remain, till the Priest hath learn'd this language, and be able to search the

heart.

*Quaecunque obijciuntur contra enumerationem peccatorum quæ fit homini, eadem obijci possunt contra enumerationem peccatorum in confessione quæ fit Deo; si illa enumeratio est impossibilis, & hæc est impossibilis; si illa est crudelis Carnificina, & hæc crudelis Carnificina.* Bellar. l. 3. de Pœn. c. 16.

1.

Luke 18.

2.

Psal. 50. 21.

3.

*utiliores lacrimarum preces sunt, quàm sermonum, quia sermo in precando fortè fallit, lacrima omnino non fallit. Sermo interdum non totum profert negotium, lacrima semper totum prodit affectum.* Ambros. Sermon. 46. de Pœnit. Petri.

heart likewise. Consider then if the performance of this task was not well reckoned amongst the knotty pieces of Christian Religion, by one that was no enemy thereunto, a late Sorbo-

*En la Religion Chrestienne il y avoit trois choses fort difficiles à pratiquer, c'est a sçavoir, passer toute sa vie sans commettre aucun peche veniel; aimer ses ennemis de cour, & d'affection; & confesser tous ses pechez a un homme. P. Bels. Carême. Tom. 2. pag. 713.*

*nist. There are in Christianity three things very difficult to be practised; that is to say, 1. to pass this life without committing any venial sin; 2. to love enemies with the heart and affection; 3. and to confess all sins unto a Priest. Point me out the man that*

hath performed these more than *Herculean* labours, and he shall be the *tantum non*, and onely *Paramount* above the rank of old *Adams* off-spring.

## 4.

No urgent necessity to the rehearſal of all sins in confession.

Our fourth exception; That this Charge is imposed upon the Conscience without any urgent necessity, for what necessary cause or good, can be here imagined; if remission of sins? It hath been proved already that God forgives many sins Priests never hear of; if because God hath appointed so? we must take his word, and not the Roman Church for divine institutions, and it must be shewed where God willeth, that the Priest should stand upon so strict a reckoning; we have the word of a King to

*In sacris literis nusquam occurrit necessitas hæc nobis imposita sub æternæ mortis pœna, ut abditissima quæ admisimus peccata Sacerdoti nota faciamus; nam si v. l. cogitatiunculam injustam celaveris, illicet, oleum cum opera perdidisti. Jacob. Rex Medit. in Orat. Doni. pag. 61.*

the contrary: *In the sacred Scriptures it no where occurreth* (saith our late dread Sovereign King *James*) *that any such necessity is imposed upon us, that upon pain of eternal death, we must make known unto the Priest the most secret sins we commit; for if thou conceal the least evil thought, all this labour beside is but lost, and cast away.*

*Remissio peccatorum impendi potest sine prævia illa confessione speciali. -- ac proinde etiã*

*then? Janenius* yieldeth a reason, that such a particular draught of confession is not necessarily previous to remission of sins; and pardon may be afforded without it; to what end drives it then? marry, there is a business called *satisfaction*, which the Priest

*nudam & apertam peccatorum confessionem ad aliorum penitentiam, quam satisfactionem vocamus, exigendam. Quæ (particularis confessio) satisfactionis magna pars est, & sine qua alio penitentiam rectè præscribi non potest. Janien. Concord. cap. 147. pag. 298. Mogun- tin. 1624.*

looks

looks after, and the Penitent must undergo, as the master-piece

in popish penance; and that cannot rightly be prescribed, except the sinner be particular. It is exacted then (according to *Canus* also) that the Priest may be made acquainted with each sin,

to measure out condign satisfaction in the Lords stead. Such an end may be made betwixt man and man; but neither men, nor Angels are able to allot, or being allotted to make condign satisfaction for the least offence against God; except his dearest Son, whose merits were of infinite value; which God hath accepted, therefore at our hands looks for no such matter.

None so poor but he may pay what he oweth unto God, unless he wilfully impoverisheth himself; although he hath not what to sell, he hath wherewith to pay; prayers, tears, fasting, are the riches of Gods debtor—for the Lord exacts not wealth, but faith, saith *Ambrose*. Such is the debt Heaven requireth to be paid; and with the Lord thereof repentance it self is the best restitution. Let us render our selves unto God that healeth us, giving him a reward; but what? to repent with a sincere heart, saith *Clemens* of Rome. But to proceed, let it be granted that man could pacifie, and right a wronged Deity, and that the Priest were to deal satisfaction to every sin as he should think fit. It would trouble all the Priests in the world to make up the measure of contrition answerable to the sin, to make the sorrow, and the offence to meet, and weigh equally with satisfaction in the scales of justice; all which doings could never satisfie a wounded Conscience. *Canus* therefore bethinking with himself to how small purpose sinners are required to be so particular, lay-

eth down this for a *Maxime*, that such, and so much notice of sin sufficeth to a Ghostly Father, as may attain unto the end of confession, *scilicet*, sine consilio, sine remedio, seu vindictam salutarem. *Canus*, Relect. de Pœnit. part. 6. pag. 975.

*Confessor institutus est loco Dei ad compensandas injurias contra Deum factas, & taxandas penas pro offensis debitas. Can. Relect. de Pœn. part. 6.*

*Nemo pauper est qui Deo debet, nisi qui se ipsum pauperem fecerit; etsi non habet quod vendat, habet quod solvat; Oratio, lacrimæ, jejunia, debitoris boni census est. — non enim pecuniam Deus, sed fidem querit. Ambros.*

*Ἐπιστάμεν ἑαυτοῖς καὶ δεχόμενοι Θεῷ, ἀντιμισθίαν αὐτῷ δίδοντες, ποίαν; τὸ μετανοῆσαι ἐξ ἐλεεινῆς καρδίας. Clemens Rom. Epist. 2. ad Corinth.*

*Hec notitia sufficit Confessori, ut finem confessionis*

*son, be it counsel, remedy or wholesome revenge* : Now in all and every sin he needs not be consulted withall as an *Advocate*, or prescribe the remedy as a *Physician*, or injoyn the *mult* as a *Judge*, and accordingly frames his conclusions ; viz. *No man*

*Non tenetur quis omnem operam quam potest dare, ut omnia peccata que fecerit in memoria conseruet, ut postea tempore confessionis nullum intermittatur.*

*Ne Christi iugum insuave, immo ad id im- portabile hominibus redderetur; ne Germani meritis possint obicere Doctores Scholasticos confessionem hodiè talem reddidisse, ut juxta illorum hæretica impossibile sit confiteri.*

Nor can we constrain any to do their best indeavour herein, except we compell them *in flagrante crimine* while the sin is hot, to set down the same in writing. And what shall the

*Quid cum Rusticis agemus? nihil aliud quam eos obligare, ut non semel modo, verum etiam centies in anno confiteantur.*

unlearned do, how shall poor Coun- trey men help their memory? sure- ly we must injoyn them to confess a hundred times in the year, else not

*Non ergo debet Confessor vexare Penitentes, punctim interrogando de numero, per anxiam, & puerilem superstitionem, faciens eos vel meminiri, vel centè falsum dicere. Canus suprà.*

the hundredth part of their sins will be thought on at the years end ; therefore *medicis diligentia*, a moderate diligence, and such as conscientious men, and fearing God use in other pious exercises, shall here suffice. And *Ghostly Fathers* ought to forbear vex- ing of their penitents by interrogating them punctually, about the number of their offences, with such anxious, and childish superstition causing them to lie, or at least to tell an un- truth. This Frier would never have connived so far, if the performance of this Romish practice had been so precisely ne- cessary ; or if he had not espied extreme difficulties, or rather impossibilities to perform the same, and by consequence the restless tortures that gnaw upon the Conscience for failing therein. And all this for good purposes superfluous, and for in- direct ends onely necessary.



Our fifth exception that Confessors under pretence of extracting of sins in particular, administer such interrogatories to *Penitents*, that over-whelme the modest sort with shame, and instruct the worse sort with a more ample knowledge of doing mischief. Read their formes of Questioning in *Summa Angelica*, and other *Summis*, and consider if thereby many an unheard-of sin be not taught, many smothered offences blown abroad, and if the way to offend, the opportunity, the delight, the baits, together with the several temptations and inducements to sin be not therein detected; so that this *Method*, and

Art of confessing is rather a *Method*, and Art of sinning; Confession it self become a *Stews*, and the Priest a *Pander* to fleshly lusts. Let their Interrogatories be perused, which referre to the VII. Commandment, of un-

cleanness, nocturnal pollution, Incest, Sodomy, whereby their *Confessors* grope after unnatural lusts, and become not *Confessores*, but *contaminatores*, as one of their own Order speaketh, proposing such Questions, which to do is *contra naturam*, and to relate, *contra reverentiam naturæ*; as a learned Lawyer spake in a late unfortunate Earls case. These Ghostly

Fathers, oftimes grievously offending in pleasing themselves with such obscene Questions, contriving them upon set purpose for their delight and pastime. Such formes of confession you may swear altogether different from the ancient *Penitential Canons*, by whose directions the spiritual Fathers of the last society looking a-squint upon the desires of the flesh, inquire

after the difference of sins obscene, and basely matters, which cannot be mentioned without blushing in the Examiner, (whose ears tingle at the hearing of unknown lusts, and uncleanness) and not without the titillation of a dishonest appetite in the Examiner himself that moveth them. Oh times that

*Interroga si sterit naturaliter in vase debito, si cum tali quæsit vitare generationem, si habuit pollutionem dormiendo, &c. de quibus legit qui plura cupit Summulas. Nos hac à scabie tenemus ungues.*

Sir Rob. Heath, at Earl of Carleboroughs attainder. April, 25. 1631.

*Qui sæpius peccant mortaliter delectando se de huiusmodi interrogationibus, & propter delectationem faciendo eas. Sum. Angel. tit. Interrog. in Confess.*

*Formulas confessionum, quibus sancti illi Pneumatici circa peccatorum differentias obscenæ quædam, & impudicæ exquirunt, quas sine Interrogati (cujus auribus inaudite turpitudines, & lascivie instillantur) rubore, & Interrogantis inhonesti appetitus titillatione vix ullis verbis, aut ne vix quidem cavere possit. Pent. Tyard. Episc. Babilon. de fratribus Jesu. pag. 35.*

such filthy communication not once named amongst the Heathen, should be thus plaied withall; these *Ghostly* Fathers to be so carnal, this penitential practice so obscene, this pretended Laver of the soul to become the sink of iniquity; this Confession of sin a profession of sinning; where men learn rather than leave sin; displeasing rather than appeasing God; and at the end of this exercise become far worse than at the beginning. Pardon (good Reader) the exuberancy of my speech justly occasioned, when the most holy pretences are the most sowlly profaned. Good reason had *Cannus* to tax such Confessors, who by their foolish interrogatories became scandalous to their Penitents, so far, as to teach them to sin; and withall confidently to reprove these *summes* of Confessions, stuffed with *Questions* of that nature, and are not onely put forth in the vulgar tongue; but are bestowed abroad upon women, and simple people, thereby to learn not the manner and form of confessing, but (as I suppose) of sinning.

*Nec eos quidem probo qui imprudenter interrogando Penitentibus scandalū injiciunt, atque ad eos peccare docent.*

*Qua in re confidenter etiam reprobo summas istas Confessionum interrogationibus plenas, quæ idiomate vulgari non solum eduntur, sed passim etiam mulierculis, & Idiotis conferuntur, ut inde discant non confitendi, sed (ut ego sentio) peccandi rationem, & normam.* Can. Relict. de Pœn. part. 6. pag. 908.

## 6.

Our last exception against this Specificque enumeration of every sin in Confession, is derived from a practice of theirs, in exempting of *Venial sins*, and *reserved cases*

*Vinialia quomvis rectè, & utiliter in Confessione dicantur, taceri tamen citra culpam, multisque aliis remediis expiari possint.* Concil. Trid. c. 5.

*Patribus nostris visum est ut atrociora quædam, & graviora crimina non à quibuscumque, sed à summis duntaxat Sacerdotibus absolverentur.* Conc. Trid. de casuum reservatione, cap. 7.

to such *Penitentiaries*, to whose jurisdiction they are immediately subject. Now if all sins that come into a sinners mind must upon pain of the second death, and that by Gods law, be opened to a Priest, by what law are some exempted, and more reserved from his audience

audience than others? Again, if *Papal reservations*, and *dispensations* be in these sins and cases of validity, it will follow that the precise enumeration of all sins is but a Church ordinance, or if Divine, then no dispensation lieth in such cases; it being a ruled case, that *Papal* power cannot dispense with the *Divine law*, but with *Ecclesiastical constitutions* onely. Let the Jesuites try the hornes of this *Dilemma*. Now by the same reason that they take off such sins from Confession, may we make bold to leave out such (as many such there are) that stand not in need of *Priestly* advise, and absolution. It will be said venial sins are not here to be reckoned for, because being of their own nature pardonable, nor so averse to God as to lose his favour, they need not to be remitted this way; neither engage so deeply to hell, nor make so great a breach betwixt God and man, as to require the Priest to stand in the gap, and to make the atonement. To the contrary, although we acknowledge great distinctions betwixt sin, and sin, and punishments proportionable; yet we affirm no sin so little, but it is in its own nature mortal; and no sin so great, but from the event may be venial. The least sin makes a breach upon Gods law. and makes the delinquent accessary to the breach of the whole law, is an offence against an infinite Deity, therefore may be punished in the strictness of his righteous judgement; yea with utter annihilation, for that (saith a profound Divine) there is no punishment so evil, and so much to be avoided as the least sin that may be imagined, so that a man should rather chuse eternal death, yea utter annihilation, than commit the least offence in the world. Again, if all Spiritual wounds must pass thorough the Priests hands of necessity for curation, then venial sins also; for though they are not *vulnera lethifera* with the Cardinal, yet they are *plaga leves*, which slighted by neglect thereof may prove deadly; a ship leaking at a little flaw may indanger drowning: The want of one nail, (as the French Proverb is) may cause the loss of shooe, horse, and horseman, for great weights many times hang upon small wires, and however some Roman controversie-men put off venial sin from Confession as in it self not mortal but venial: Bishop *Fisher* dares not like of

*Venialia ex natura & ratione peccati, quæ non sunt contraria charitati Dei & proximi. Bellar. l. i. de amiss. gratiæ, cap. 3.*

Doctor Field of the Church, Book 3. c. 32.

Bellar. l. i. r. de Amis. grat. c. 2.

*Pour un clou on perd un fer, & pour un fer un cheval, & pour un cheval un chevalier.*

that

*Quod peccatum veniale solum ex Dei misericordia veniale sit, in hoc tecum sentio. Rosenf. contr. Luth. art. 32. p. 317.*

that avoidance, but professeth his consent herein with *Luther*; That *venial sin is only venial from the mercy of God*; and in that respect may all other sins be venial too as capable of Divine mercy: So venial sin hath no prerogative that way, nor may for that cause be justly exempted from auricular Confession.

For *reserved cases* wherein sins of the greater magnitude are made over to the *Pope*, and whereby they shut up the kingdom of heaven before men, without being opened by a golden key; we have little to say, save considering the great expences, tedious journies, continual delaies, whereby much treasure was exhausted forth of this *Land*, and many of the better sort of the Inhabitants made slaves; we are to bless our God that this *Antichristian* yoke is cast off, the tyrannie overthrown, and our selves delivered from a more than *Egyptian* servitude. And

*Rom non esse perspicue veritatis; à nullo Patrum mentionem eius factam; immò Durandum, Gersoneni, & Cajetanum magni nominis viros affirmare, non peccata, sed censuras modò Pontificis judicio reservatas. — Colonienfes Theologi affirmantes neminem ex antiquis Scriptoris reservationis meminisse, nisi in casu publicorum peccatorum. — certè hereticos eos accusare tanquam pecuniarum aucupes. Hist. Concil. Trid. l. 4. p. 283.*

while the matter was proposed and scan'd at *Trent*, the Divines of *Lo-vain* objected, that it was not a point of evident verity, mentioned not by one of the *Father*s; that *Du and, Gerson, and Cajetan* affirm'd not sins, but censures to be reserved for Papal publication. The Divines of *Colen* added, how none of the ancient Writers mentioned Reservation, but in case of publick sins, and that the Hereticks would for certaine accuse them for contriving how to squeeze, and empty mens purses, and coffers. So then if those men that stand so much for detection of all sins unto the *Priest* have made so bold as to cut off the two extremes, viz the greatest, and the least offences; I see no

*Auricularis Confessio prout in Ecclesia Rom. usurpatur, nihil ferè est al. ul quàm vericulum ad hominum secreta, & arcana exciscanda, artificiosè contextam; Quod quidem non sit ut ægis Medicina, vuln. ratis conscientis opobalsamum, contritis solotium solidum adhiberi possit, sed ut aurum, & argentum inde conficiant, emilq. ad ipsorum lucrum convertantur. Malon. de Minister. Anglic. lib. 5. c. 12.*

reason but that we may use the like liberty, but upon far more likely, and better reasons. I shall conclude these exceptions with the saying of an able *Divine* at home; *Auricular Confession as it is used in*

the Church of Rome, is almost nothing else but a Net artificially woven, to fish after, and comprehend the secret and hidden things of men; nor is it sousted as to afford Physick to the diseased, or pretious balme for Wounded consciences, or sure comfort for broken and contrite hearts; but thereby to compass Gold and Silver, and to convert all into their own purposes.

There are some Stories or rather superstitious Lies, (as Sir Tho. More calls them) devised to uphold this doctrine:

"The one is of a Woman who having committed adultery, could never in eleven years space be brought to utter the same in any Confession; Two Priests, whereof one was the Popes Penitentiary, and another as holy as he, coming into those parts, and both being in the Church about their Priestly affaires, the woman approached to the Penitentiary to be shriven & at every sin she confessed, the other Priest standing within view, but not within hearing, saw an Owle flutter out of her mouth, and after the flight of many Owles, she stopped (it seemeth) at her concealed sin, and was no sooner absolved of the rest confessed by her, and risen up, then the same Priest saw all those Owles reenter into her mouth, with another more ugly than any of the former. The Priests proceeding onwards in their journey, the one told unto the other what he saw: The Penitentiary guessed that the woman had kept back some sin in Confession; he returned therefore, but at his return found her suffocated, and dead; to whom her soul appear'd tortured in a fearful manner, and all for burying of that sin in silence; and being questioned by the Penitentiary for what sins those of her sex were usually damned; For Fornication, (said she) wanton dressing, and Painting, and for Shame in not confessing. Hereby it is intimated that Confession *en partie* is of no validity; and one sin concealed hinders all the rest from pardon. But another Woman though faulty in the same kind, yet had better success, of whom the relation passeth thus: "She was otherwise very religious, but in her younger dayes had fallen into a sin of that nature, as she could not for Shame utter the same unto the Priest, but used to conclude, "Of all the sins which I have opened or not, I confess my self to

*Ad quamlibet  
expressionem  
unius peccati  
Bubo exibat de  
ore ejus.*

*Illi Bubones cum  
uno alio majo-  
ris & eorum  
maioris forme tur-  
matum ingressi  
sunt in os muli-  
eris & ventrem.*

*Spec. exam-  
plor. d. 9. Sect.  
31. Quo libro  
miraculorum  
monstra sepius  
quam vera mi-  
racula legas.  
Can. loc. The-  
ol. l. 1. c. 6.  
pag. 540.  
Dist. 3. Sect.*

*45.  
De omnibus  
peccatis que  
modo protuli,  
et que non pro-  
tuli, culpabilem  
me fateor coram  
Deo & vobis.*

*Coram ipſius  
altari vel ima-  
gine.*

*Conſtituit in S.  
eccleſia nomi-  
nem ſine confeſ-  
ſione ſalvari  
poſſe.*

*Clotharius ad Sepulcrum Sancti Martini  
cunctas actiones quas fortasſe negligenter eg-  
erat, replicans, & orans cum grandi gemitu  
ut pro ſuis culpis B. Confefſor Domini miſeri-  
cordiam exoraret. Hiſt. lib. 4. Sect. 21.*

*Eccleſie Chriſti vehementer incommodant,  
qui res Divorum præclare geſtas non ſe putant  
egregiè expoſituſ, niſi eas fictis & revelati-  
onibus & miraculis adornarint. Canus loc.  
Theol. lib. 11. c. 6. p. 537.*

“*be guilty before God and you*; and could never be brought to  
“*ſpecifie the ſame*; after her death, and before her burial,  
“*ſhe revived, and ſpake to this effect*; that ſhe had commit-  
“*ted one ſin which for ſhame ſhe could not confeſs*, but with  
“*many tears was wont to utter the ſame before the Altar, and*  
“*image of the bleſſed Virgin*, and deſire her interceſſions,  
“*that ſhe might not be damned for this concealed ſin*; and  
“*told withall that after her death ſhe was ſeiſed on by evil*  
“*ſpirits, but reſcued by the bleſſed Virgin, and by her means*  
“*to her Son reſtored from death to life, to confeſs, and be*  
“*affoyled of that ſin*; which was no ſooner performed, but ſhe  
“*again yielded up the gholt. Here three Popiſh tenets are con-*  
“*firmed at one blow, 1. neceſſity to confeſs every ſin, 2. worſhip-*  
“*ing of Saints, and 3. before Images, and their Altars. As*  
“*this woman made her confeſſion at the bleſſed Virgins altar,*

ſo *Gregory Turonenſis* relateth, that  
*Clotharius* King of *France* confeſſed  
his ſins at *Saint Martins ſhrine*, and  
became an earneſt ſuiter to that *Con-*  
*feſſor* to become a mean for mercy  
for him; but whether *Saint Martin*

took that courſe with that *Prince*, as the bleſſed Virgin did  
with her penitent, to ſend him back after death to be ſhriven  
by a *Prieſt*, or tendred his confeſſion unto God and there pro-  
cured abſolution, the Author hath not expreſſed. Such ſtories  
as theſe were thought meet for the vulgar to ruminate on; yea  
the *Pulpits* founded therewith, many

*Hiſtorians* (ſaith *Canus*) have been  
content to think how by the true law of  
hiſtory, they might record ſuch things  
as the people thought to be true, not  
conſidering the injury done unto the

*Church*, as if *Saints* lives were not ſufficiently related, except  
their actions were ſet out with fained miracle, and revelations.

In what credit ſuch Fables were, the vulgar beſt know; But  
in truth it was late in the world before men were called to ſo  
ſtriſt a reckoning. In the former dayes either recurrence was  
made to God onely, or a general confeſſion before the Church,  
or



or a special discovery of such sins which made such a combustion in the sinners breast, as he could not quench alone, but (the fire all about his ears) must call for aid of his neighbours, and amongst them the *Priests*, that are best able to abate those flames. Lighter sins, *Quotidiana incurfiones*, as *Tertullian* calls them, Quotidian shakings are opened in the general confession of the Church; and 'tis not impossible for a *Penitent* faithful and sincere, to make his peace with God himself for sins that press more grievous. But in many sins and sinners it is found by often experience, that notwithstanding their private addresses unto God, the wounded conscience will still pinch fearfully, nor will the worm cease to gnaw. Then at such a time as this, when a sinner can find no ease at home, what should he do but use the best means he can to le<sup>k</sup> it abroad? I said it was long before this busie enumeration was enjoined: A general Confession, or an intimation of some special sins which lay indigested upon the Conscience, was chiefly required. Now if at any time such strictness were necessary, then at our last *Audis*, when we are *in extremis*, and in the shadow of death, and about to take our leaves of this sinful world, and to make our peace with God whilest the last grains of sand are running in this glassie life. Yet as it appeareth in an ancient form of interrogating sick persons, and ascribed to our *An'elme*, the *Priests* were not then so particular; the form it self is worthy to stand in this place, and is thus: *The sick-*

*man languishing and at the point of death ought to be thus interrogated, and so to answer: Brother, dost thou rejoyce that thou mayest die in the Christian faith? let him answer Yea. Q. Thou confess'st that thou hast not liv'd so well as thou oughtest? Ans.*

*Interrogatio facienda infirmo in extremis constituto, ab Anselmo prescripta; Infirmus languens in extremis debet sic interrogari, & sic respondere. Frater, letaris quod in fide Christiana moriaris? Respondent, etiam. Fateris te non ita bene vixisse sicut debuisti? Resp. Etiam. Fateris te tam male vixisse, ut meritis tuis eterna pena debeatur? Resp. Etiam. Penitet te? R. Sp. Etiam. Habes voluntatem emendandi te, si spiritum haberes vivendi? Resp. Etiam. Credis quod Iesus Christus filius Dei natus fuit ex Maria Virgine gloriosa? R. Sp. Etiam. Credis quod Iesus Christus filius Dei pro te mortuus fuit? R. Sp. Credo. Aquis ei gratias propter ista beneficia? R. Sp. Etiam. Credis te non possenisi per eius mortem salvari? R. Sp. Etiam. — Quo expleto dicit infirmus ter, In manus tuas commendo Spiritum meum, & Clero in idipsum respondente, securus moritur. Edit. ad finem opusculi Epil. Rossen. de fide & misericordia Dei à Georg. Callandro.*

D d

Yea.

*vendi? Resp. Etiam. Credis quod Iesus Christus filius Dei natus fuit ex Maria Virgine gloriosa? R. Sp. Etiam. Credis quod Iesus Christus filius Dei pro te mortuus fuit? R. Sp. Credo. Aquis ei gratias propter ista beneficia? R. Sp. Etiam. Credis te non possenisi per eius mortem salvari? R. Sp. Etiam. — Quo expleto dicit infirmus ter, In manus tuas commendo Spiritum meum, & Clero in idipsum respondente, securus moritur. Edit. ad finem opusculi Epil. Rossen. de fide & misericordia Dei à Georg. Callandro.*

*Yea. Q. Thou acknowledgest that thou hast lived so evil, as thou hast deserved eternal death? Ans. Yea. Q. Hast thou any purpose to amend, if thou mayest have further space to live? Ans. Yea. Q. Thou believest that Jesus Christ the Son of God was born of the glorious Virgin Mary? Ans. Yea. Thou believest that Jesus Christ the Son of God died for thee? Ans. Yea. Thou art thankful unto him for these benefits? Ans. Yea. Q. Thou believest that thou canst not be saved but by his death? Ans. Yea. This was all the Questioning in those dayes thought fit to be used at the hour of death; which after some comfortable instructions how the sick-man should behave himself in this last encounter; the conclusion is, Let him rehearse thrice, Into thy hands I commend my spirit, and the Clergie answering the same, he may safely, and peacefully depart. We see what kind of Confession then sufficed, and it was not the work of one age to bring the people to any other.*

*Erubescetes peccata sua sacerdotibus confiteri, quoddam occasionis ingenium invenierunt, dicentes sibi sufficere, ut soli Deo peccata sua confiteantur, si tamen ab ipsis peccatis in reliquo cessent. Haymo Dominici 14. post. Pentecost. pag. 401.*

*Haymo complained that some in his dayes blushing to confess their sins unto the Priest, found out a witty occasion to forbear, saying it was sufficient for them that they did confess their sins unto God, if so be they ceased from those sins for the time to come. Others*

would not be brought to that full measure as began then to be imposed, confessing, but not fully, their sins unto the Priest; as may be gathered from a Council held at Cavaillon in the dayes of Charles the great: Wherein though those Fathers were otherwise minded, and desire it to be amended, yet they intimate that in their times it was questioned, whether men should confess unto God onely, or to the Priest also. And they themselves put this difference betwixt both these Confessions, that the one did properly serve for the cure, the other for direction, in what sort the repentance, and so the cure should be

*Sed & hoc commendatione indigere perpeximus. Quod quidam dum confitentur peccata sua, non plenè ad faciunt.*

*Quidam solummodò Deo confiteri debere dicunt peccata, quidam verò Sacerdotibus confrenda esse precensur: Quod utrumq; non sine magno fructu intra Sanctam sit ecclesiam, ita duntaxat ut, & Deo qui remissor est peccatorum confitemur peccata nostra, & cum Da-*

*performed; their words ensue: Some say sins are to be confessed unto God alone, but others are of opinion that they are to be confessed unto a Priest; both of which are performed in the Church not without great fruit, so ve-*

*ri's*

riely as we confess our sins unto God, who is the forgiver thereof, and say with David, I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and my iniquity have I not hid; I said I will confess my sins unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin: and according to the institution of the Apostle, Let us confess our sins one to another, and pray one for another, that we may

be saved: *The confession therefore which is made unto God purgeth sins, and that which is made unto the Priest sheweth how they may be purged; For God the Author and bestower of salvation and health, oftentimes affords the same by the invisible administration of his own power, and many times by the operation of Physicians; wherein those words are to be noted, that many sinnes are forgiven by God immediately, or by the invisible administration of his own power, and consequently need not be confessed unto any but God alone; and many again mediately by the operation of soul-Physicians, and therefore are to pass thorough their hands, and ears also; whence infer, that to Priests some sins, though not all, are to be confessed.*

But what those *some* are is the point indeed: For if those *some* be left loosely, and at random *indiscriminatum*, they will hardly prove any, or none at all. The discerning of these sins must not hang alone upon the slender thread of a Lay-capacity, and the sinners own discretion; for we *seldome* make any prospect upon our worser parts, and *never* but with partiality, turning the *perspective* so upon our own sins, as to make them appear *Atomes*, and in less figures than they are; and so upon the sins of others, as to multiply, and dilate them; we are not then in this behalf wholly to be left unto our selves. Venerable *Bede* observeth, that amongst the diseased healed by Christ, onely the Lepers were sent by him to the Priests, because the Levitical Priesthood was a Type of his own; and inferreth, that such as were tainted with heret-

vid dicamus, Delictum meum cognitum tibi feci, & in justitiam meam non abscondi; Dixi confitebor, &c. & secundum institutionem Apostoli, Confiteamur alterutrum peccata nostra, &c. Confessio itaque quæ sit Deo, purgat peccata; ea vero quæ Sacerdoti sit, docet qualiter ipsa purgentur peccata; Deus namque salutis & sanitatis auctor & largitor plerumque hanc prebet sue potentie invisibilis administratione, plerumque Medicorum operatione. Conc. Cabil. 2. c. 32, 33.

The condition of those sins as ought to be confessed to the Priest.

Nullum Dominus eorum quibus hæc corporalia beneficia præstitit, invenitur misisse ad Sacerdotes, nisi Leprosos; quia Sacerdotium Judæorum figura erat Sacerdotii futuri regalis quod est in Ecclesia. — Quisquis hæreticæ pravitate, vel superstitione genui, vel Ju-

daicâ perfidiâ, vel etiam Schismate fraterno, quasi vario colore per Christi gratiam caruerit, necesse est ad Ecclesiam veniat, colorémque fidei verum quem acceperit, ostendat; cetera verò vitia tanquam valetudines, & quasi membrorum animæ, atque sensuum, per semetipsum interius in conscientia, & intellectu Dominus sanat, & corrigit. Bed. hom. de 10. Lepros.

call pravity, gentile-Superstition, Judaicall perfidiousness, or Schisme from the brotherhood, and were by the grace of Christ delivered thereof; should of necessity resort unto the Church, and make profession of the true tincture of faith newly imbraced. But other vices, as it were diseases, and as if of

the members of the soul, and sense, the Lord healeth inwardly by himself in the Conscience, and understanding. Some sins then according to Bed. are to be presented to the Church, and not all; and as Christ healed many that were diseased, and injoynd the Lepers onely to shew themselves unto the Priests; so he forgiveth many sinnes privately to the Conscience of the Penitent, but some are reserved for the Priests cognizance. And in

Quotidianal vitæque peccata alterutrum coequalibus confiteamur. — porro gravioris lepræ immunditiâ Sacerdoti pandimus. Bed. in Jac. 5.

another place the same Bede would have us to confesse our daily and light sins one to another, but to open the uncleanness of the greater leprosie unto the Priest. Herein the Case held in the

course of publick Penance will somewhat guide us: for in the first and strictest dayes of the Church, there were three sins held incapable of mercy, but to be peccata ad mortem; of which Saint John speaketh, and directeth not to pray for; (a) now where there is no place for prayer, there is no grace for pardon; and these three were Idolatry, Murder, and Adultery.

(a) Ubi nec postulatio ibi æquè nec remissionis. Tert. de Pud. c. 1.

This cruel opinion lasted till Tertullians dayes, who either ironically, or hastily, thus writeth; The High Priest the Bishop of Bishops saith, I absolve those that have done penance of fornication and adultery. O edict which none can justly commend! Tertullian now a Montanist, sharply taking up the dispenser of that relaxation. By which Bishop if Christ be meant, as Junius, then the words are otherwise saved by that great Critick; or if the Pope, as Petavius, then

Pontifex scilicet Maximus, Episcopus Episcoporum dicit, ego & Marci & fornicationis delicta penitentia sanctis dimitto: O edictum cum non poterit ascribi, bonum factum! De Pudic. c. 5.

Sunt isti Ironici, Pontifex M. Christus puta, edictum istud promulgaverit. Notæ Fr. Jun. ad Tert. de pud. pag. 198.

Tertullian  
Vixit & Zephirin. Anno 198.

then the dispensation must come from *Zephyrine*. The next age waxed milder, not denying pardon, and yet not conferring absolution to the guilty of these crimes, were they never so penitent, and zealous thereof, no, not at the last gasp, and ease of utmost extremity. It was old *Serapions* case, lapsed in persecution, who could never (though ever desirous, and promising a *myriad of times to wade through all the degrees of the Penitent's*) be admitted to communicate. Times were yet more gentle when *Cyprian* was; denying not but withall *deferring* absolution till the point of death, and then absolving the guilty of those offences. This practice shewed, that all sins were not equally capable of grace, and pardon, that in some the spot being fowler, and the guilt heavier, the justification was more difficult, and the expiation more laborious, which to assail was at one time held by the Church to be impossible, and ever difficult to be loosed by the Ministerial key. Besides those sins, there were others in the next rank, which they called *capital offences*, not in the sense of the School Divines, who make capital and mortal of equal latitude, and both which dispossess the sinner of the ornament of Charity; but some more heinous than ordinary, and which by name are expressed in the Canons, and decrees of Councils; and to which several and distinct penances were allotted, and belonged. Other sins also there were of an inferior alloy, and burthen, and of them the Penitential Canons took no notice, saith their great Antiquary *Petavius*. So then as of old, not all sins, but selected ones, were assigned for publick exomologesis; the like may be said that there is no necessity of revealing all, but some offences which press deepest upon the Conscience, to the Ministers of Reconciliation.

Moreover, we may learn by the Church-Censures what sins properly

Μικέτι λοιπὸν χάσαν ἔχειν, μηδ' ἀν-  
μυειάκις ἐπαγγέλληται τὴν τάξιν ἀνα-  
πληρῶν ἑβ' μελαροέντων. *Euseb. Eccl.*  
*hist. l. 6 c. 36.*

*Capitalia dicebantur, non ut nos intelligere  
vulgò solemus, quæcunque Dei nos gratia, &  
Spiritualibus charitatis ornamentis spoliant, sed  
que cum graviora cæteris essent, tum Canoni-  
bus, & Synodorum decretis nominatim expressa,  
quibus pænæ à Canonibus singillatim proposi-  
te — alia verò leviora, de quibus nulla  
extat in conciliorum decretis mentio. D. Pe-  
tav. animadvers. ad Epiphan. hæc. 49,  
pag. 238.*

*Abfit ut quoties peccatum fuit, toties excommunicationis sententiam exhibendam esse, aut publicum resipiscentie testimonium à singulis personis efflagitari. Quam enim multo, nobis solis confitii, in dies, & horas admittimus, quæ privata coram Deo confessione, adjunctis precibus condonantur? Quorsum etiam erant quotidiana preces cum sacrificiis matutinis, & vespertinis institutæ sub lege? Quorsum nunc quoque sacros conventus à reatu nostri confessione auspicamur, nisi ut quotidiana peccata absque ulla alia cognitione nobis condonentur? de solis igitur, & gravioribus peccatis, & cum offendiculo Ecclesie conjunctis, publicæ satisfactiones intelligendæ sunt. Beza de Presbyt. & excom. pag. 43. edit. Genev. 1590.*

properly appertain to Confession. God forbid (saith Beza) that the Church should fulminate her excommunication for every sin, or that publick testimony or repentance should from all persons be exacted, though in extremity every sin incur Gods displeasure, the sinner is exiled his presence, and needeth to be reconciled by repentance: for how many sins do we daily and hourly commit, which are pardoned upon private confession before God, with prayers annexed? To what end served the daily prayers, the morning and evening Sacrifices under the law? To

what purpose do we in our sacred assemblies begin, and enter into our solemn prayers with confession of our guiltiness, but that our daily sins might be forgiven without any further acknowledgment? Publick satisfactions therefore must be understood of such sins as are hainous, and scandalous to the Congregation. Hitherto Beza. The objection of Erastus was, All sins deserve excommunication, therefore the censure was to be served either upon all or none. Beza denies the consequent, and sheweth good reasons why all sins are not subject to the Censure; and which serve also to shew why all sins are not to be stood upon in Confession, because sins of a lesser magnitude may be otherwise blotted out by private Confession and tears, or by the general and publick acknowledgment of the Church; and as notorious, and scandalous, were onely liable to the Churches censure, and penance. So not all sins but such as afflict the Conscience, and suffer the sinner to take no rest, are necessary to be confessed. And this doctrine our Church maintaineth, and wiseth all her children to take it to heart; carefully distinguishing the same from the so much abused Popish Auricular Confession which they thrust upon the souls of Christians as an expiatory sacrifice, and meritorious satisfaction for sin; racking their Consciences to confess when they feel no distress, and to enumerate all their sins



sins (which is impossible) that by this means they might dive into the secrets of all hearts; which oftentimes hath proved pernicious, not onely to private persons, but also to publick States.

To conclude then; *Gravioris lepræ immunditia*, with Bede, the unclean and more grievous leprosie; *Omne quod remordet conscientiam*, with Saint Bernard, every sin that biteth the Conscience; *Quando quis ita angitur & affligitur peccatorum sensu, ut se explicare nisi alieno adjutorio nequeat.* with, Calvin; The sins that gore, or prick the conscience, and out of which without and from without, the sinner cannot wind himself: when a man cannot quiet his own Conscience, as the Church prescribeth, or is burdened with sin; so the Bishop of Duresme: Or in the case of perplexity for the quieting of men disturbed in their Consciences, as the Bishop of Norwich: In all of which we are enjoyned to shew our selves unto the Priest, and to seek at his hands both the counsel of instruction, and hope of Gods pardon, as Bishop Morton: To receive Ghostly comfort, advice, and counsel, and the benefit of absolution to the quieting of his conscience, as our sacred Liturgie admonisheth. Remember (good People) this Medicine is for your diseases; this Balme for your griefs, advancing your safety more, than shewing forth the Ministers power; the treasure of absolution is yours, he keepeth but the key, to open the same for you upon a Penitential knock. A pious Priest delighteth not in the sad story of your infirmities, nor blames you with reprochful words, but embalmes you with many tears; weeping with such as weep, and sighing with those that are in distress: his crown, and rejoycing is like the good Samaritan to pour oyl and wine into your gaping wounds. Despise not Gods ordinance, it is powerful, and to those that use it right, efficacious. Neglect not the benefit of the keys, for the Priest beareth them not in vain; flight not his Ministry, it is the word of Reconciliation. Keep thy conscience waking, and the eyes thereof open; the case is fearful where the Conscience slumbreth, and the soul is dark where that light is extinguished. Oh preserve the voice of this

Bed. in Jac. 5.  
Bernard. hom.  
16. in Cantic.  
Calvin. Instit.  
p. 339.

Rubrick at the  
Communion.  
Bishop Mor-  
ton Appeal.  
lib. 2. cap. 14.  
Bishop Mon-  
tagu Appeal.  
pag. 299.

*condolere novimus peccantes affectu intimo—  
Quotiescunque alicuius lapsi peccatum expo-  
nitur, compatiar; nec superbe increpem, sed  
lugeam, & defleam.* Amb. 1. 2. de pœnis  
cap. 11.

Turtle,

*Vox Turturis,*  
*vox gemitus.*  
Bern.

AA. 9.

*Turtle*, stop not thine ears at this *Charmer*, it is Gods *Deputy*, and *Watchman*. Thou hast just reason to fear he hath yielded up thy *fort* unto the enemy, when it no longer keeps *Centinel*. Keep this jewel alive; Preserve it with a meditation of Gods *Judgments*, and thy *deserts*; feed it with the promises of the *Gospel*, and yet it will inform thee when this *Physick* must be used. It will send thee to the *Minister*, as the *voice* in the *vision* did *Paul* to *Ananias*. It will open thy cause without flattery, spur thee on to seek comfort without delay, and comfort thee more in the remission and pardon, than the terroure of the sin could afflict thee. Make the Conscience thy *Examiner*, and thou shalt the better discern in what cases the Priest must be thy *Judge*, and his Ministry thy relief and comfort.

## CHAP. VIII.

### The Contents.

*Of the Confessary, or Priest that receiveth Confessions, and his authority for the same; Divided into two Sections.*

**A**Nd thus much for Confession of sin in the lips of the *Penitent*; proceed we now to speak of the *Confessary*, as it relates to his ears, who is to receive into his custody and discretion, the sad narration of a sinners life, and to promote the just designs and purposes the penitent aimeth at. Of great and necessary importance this practice must be, as much opposing our native pride, in turning the best side outward, and beautifying our external carriage, like the *Pharisees* cleansing the outside of the platter; never taking notice, or at least careful that others should not, of our inward corruption. Verily to subdue this inbred tumour, and natural

*Typh.*

Typhon so far, as to lay aside shame, and to lay open our sins, to discover our offences, and to diminish our reputation, it must needs be the end is heavenly when worldly respects are thus trodden under foot to accomplish the same. As when David strip'd himself into an Ephod, and danced before the Lord in the Ark, and was for the same derided by Michal, as *shamefully uncovering himself in the eyes of his handmaids*, answered, *It was before the Lord, I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight; and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.* So it is with a devout Penitent, for how ever he may by discovering himself thus, be exposed to the scoffs, and jeers of irreligious and profane Michals, yet he knoweth before whom he doth it, in the presence of the Lord, and that in so doing he shall be had in honour of the Lords servants, his Priests, therefore he resolveth *vilior adhuc fiam*, I will become yet more vile than this; for with me to confess my sin is nothing so vile as to commit, and blush more entering into the stewes, than coming forth, abasing my self in mine own sight to become pretious in the Lords eyes. When therefore sin is *ἐπιεισαλὼν*, *compassing*, and *β* *setting the sinner about*, beleagring his soul, & he finds it not in his own power to raise the siege, nor to explicate, and unfold himself from such ingagements, when the Conscience is inflamed, and perplexed, and can find no peace at home. In such cases the sinner hath recourse unto the Overseers of his soul, for help, and ease, and freedome, as the nature of his disease requireth; as to a 1. *Ghostly Father* indulgent to his Child-en, 2. as to a *Physician* careful of his Patients, 3. as an *Advocate* and Counsellor able to direct, and protect his Clients; and lastly, but chiefly, as unto the Priest, whose office is to grant absolution to the truly Penitent. So that to the wounded Conscience here is a *Medicine*, to the perplexed counsel, to the dejected comfort, and to the distressed pardon. The sting of sin is lost by the power of absolution; the filth of sin is purged by the Laver of tears; the wages of sin struck off, by the Intercession of the great Advocate; the deceitfulness of sin discovered by this Counsellor, and the danger of sin prevented by the balme of mercy. A Physician is sought unto for health,

2 Sam. 6. 21,  
22.

Τὴν ἐπιεισα-  
λὼν ἀμαρτίαν.  
Heb. 12. 1.

and sometimes for *remedy*; A Lawyer for advice, and counsel; A friend for consolation; A good Priest is virtually all these, and something more; thy spiritual Physician against spiritual diseases, healing them by application of thy Saviours merits; and prescribing rules for thy direction, and remedy against sin. Thy spiritual *Advocate* to counsel thy soul in such cases, & to plead thy cause before the supreme Judge; and which crowneth all, he is the Lords *Steward*, and *Deputy* in his name to reach forth unto thee pardon, and absolution. These, and such like to these are the motives, inducing a sinner to deposit his mind and heart to the *Dispensers* of the *Mysteries* of God, viz. 1. upon hope of *Physick*, *restorative*, and *preservative*, to heal his soul, and to continue the same in health; 2. of good advice, to demean and behave himself for future times; 3. and above all, upon the hope and comfort of absolution; these are his inducements, and to be now treated of. And therein the last shall be first, as the chiefest, and choicest motive to confession of sin; namely the virtue and power of absolution inherent in the Priestly office, and Ministry: that saying of *Ambrose* being true, *None can be truly penitent but upon hope of Pardon.*

*Nemo potest bene agere penitentiam, nisi qui speraverit indulgentiam.*  
Ambros.

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SECT.

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S E C T. I.

The Contents.

*The vulgarly disesteem of the power of absolution in the hand of Priests. Keys diverse; Of 1. Authority. 2. Excellency. 3. Ministry. The office of the Ministerial key in discerning, and defining. Ecclesiastical, and conscientious Consistories. The gift of Science in the Priest not properly the key, but the Guide. Absolution a judicial act. Magistrates Spiritual and Temporal, distinguished in their jurisdiction, and ends. Bonds of sin culpable, and for sin Penall. Satisfaction expiatory, vindictive. God forgiveth sins properly, and effectively. The Priest by way of application and notice, as also dispositively, qualifying by his function sinners for the same, in which he proceedeth as a subordinate Cause both declaratively, and operatively. The Priority of binding, and loosing on earth to heaven in respect of the sensible apprehension in the Penitent, not of the purpose, and operation in God. Power of Absolution primitive in God, in his Ministers derivative, and delegate. A Penitent absolving himself by the finger of Gods spirit in what sense. The power of binding in the Church rather privative, than positive, and declarative only.*

**I**F the Priests and Ministers of the Gospel were not in Commission to enquire, to hear, and to take some order about the sins of the people, their function were to as little purpose, and as little to be esteemed as the *Lutins* of the times account

Cujacius.

it; (for as in the time of *Galen* they expressed weak-men under the title of *Scholasticks*, so are Priests entituled, by the Hot-spurs of this age as silly, and contemptible; meer *Δειδωτες*, and *John a Nokes*.) Could men live without sin, or enter into heaven with sin, or having sinned stand in need of no grace to amend, of no gift to repent, and in fear of no Deity to be reconciled; or were the wounds of sin so little, as to heal up of themselves, without any further plaister; or were there no law that there might be no transgression; or if a Law, with no great penalty to be inflicted upon the transgressors head: or if the penalty were great, yet the *Law-giver* of small power to inflict the same: there could be no great necessity to erect this Court of Conscience, the matter thereof no great consequent, and the Censures, viz. retention, and remission of sins of no great importance, and sinners discharged of further suit, and service. And the Priests might do well with *Gallio*, to care for none of these things; and do drive the attenders from these judgment-seats. But if no disease be more deadly than sin, and no law hath so powerful an avenger as God: it will follow no ordinance to be more acceptable, and necessary, than that which reconciles the lost favour of God unto the transgressors of his laws. Thou then whosoever thou art that disesteemest the power of God in the Ministry of his Priests, be first without sin before thou cast the first stone against it; and except thou beest exempted from common infirmities, v. l. sic not these Physicians. It is not the least of *Satans* subtilties to weaken this ordinance in many mens estimations, as no useful institution of God, but an usurpation of the Prelates; serving more to establish their tyrannie over the peoples consciences, than to quiet and pacifie them; and as the Priests are too supercilious to prescribe, so the people may be too superstitious to observe: thus the Serpent by degrees hath brought this laudable practice first out of credit, and next out of use for the most part; and so highly that by many transported with impudence, the Priest is questioned as *Moses* was by the *Hebrews*, *Quis te constituit Judicem? Who hath made thee a Prince, and Judge over us?* though his intents be onely to part the fray betwixt God and the sinner, and set them at peace, as *Moses* betwixt his country-

Exod. 2. 14.



country-men. And as *Korah* and his complices said to *Moses* and *Aaron*, *Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation is holy, and the Lord amongst them*, So is the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy traduced by our modern *Schismatics* for *Usurpation*, for *Tyrannie*, for *Lording* it over Gods inheritance. Are not all the Brethren Saints, why do you *Prelates* then lift up your selves above them? Saints let them be, is there not *principality* amongst *Saints* as well as amongst *Devils*? But, are not all Gods people a royal Priesthood? why do you Priests arrogate unto you any prerogative above your fellows? to such tender ears the very name of absolution is odious, and the *keys* themselves disliked because born cross-wise at *Rome*; lest therefore such *Monsieurs les Greffiers* question us, as the *Scribes* did our *Saviour*; By what authority dost thou these things? We will clear the coats, and evidence these disquisitions, 1. what power is given unto the Priest in the matter of sin, and therein whence this commission issue: h, and to whom it is directed; 2. what are the acts, and exercises thereof, and wherewithall the same is executed; 3. then of the properties thereof, whether the Priests sentence be absolute, and infallible, and whether Ministerial, and judicial; 4. and lastly, the abuses shall be paralleld with the positive truth, and thereby measured, and discerned.

Numb. 16. 3.

Matth. 12. 7. 4.

The first grant of this power unto man, is the promise of Christ made unto *Peter*, under the metaphor of the keys, saying, *I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven: a power of great latitude and extent, equivalent in the opinion of Saint Chrysostome. as to give the places on his right and left hand in his kingdom: whereupon that Father questioneth, (but answereth himself) how shall Christ give the power of the keys, that hath not in his hands the placing of the seats? thereby also demonstrating himself to be God, in conferring that property (power of remitting sins) which appertaineth*

Of the Power of the keys.  
Matth. 16. 19.

Πᾶς ὅς, ἐκ εἶπεν αὐτῷ δέναι τὸ καθίσαι ἐν δεξιῶν, καὶ ἐξ ἐναντίον τοῦ λέγοντος ἐγὼ σοὶ δώσω; — ἡ γὰρ Θεὸς μόνον εἶναι ἵδια τὸ τὰ ἀμαρτήματα λύσαι.  
Chrys. in Matth. 16. Tom. 2. pag. 344.

Keys.

Luke 4. 18.

Esay 22. 22.

Revel. 3. 7.

Discrimen est, quod illud videtur inferioris  
Ministri puta מְשִׁיבֵי הַמָּוֶה, idque tantum in  
familia Davidis; hoc supremi Gubernatoris,  
atque quidem totius regni. Brightman. Apo-  
calypf. cap. 3. 7.

סוכן שהיה  
ממנה  
על בית  
המלכות.

Aben Ezra,  
Thesaurarius  
super domum  
regalem.  
Θησαυροφ  
μνησιν  
Θεού. 1 Cor.

4. 1.

1. Clavis auctoritatis solius Dei. 2. Clavis excellentia solius Christi.

appertaineth to God onely. These termes are to be opened,  
1. what the *keys* mean; 2. next how they are to be used un-  
der these words of *binding* and *loosing*; 3. in the third place a-  
bout what they are imployed, the *object quicquid, whatsoever*;  
4. and lastly by whom, *Tibi Dabo, I will give unto thee*. For  
the first: The holy Ghost compareth a sinners case to the estate  
of a person imprisoned, the very termes of *keys*, of *opening*  
and *shutting*, seem to have relation (as it were) to the *prison*  
*gate*; and the termes of *binding* and *loosing*, (as it were) to the  
*fetters* and *bonds*; as if sin were a *prison*, and the case of sinners  
like theirs that are *shut up*; whereupon the power given unto  
*Christ as man*, was to preach *ἀφεσις* remission, or *deliverance*  
to *captives*. And keys imply a faculty to that person to whose  
custody they are committed; as when *Eliakim* was invested  
into *Shebnahs* place, it is said, *I will lay the key of David upon his*  
*shoulder*: which words seem to be lent unto the *Apostle*, and  
by him applied unto our *Saviour*, *These things saith he that is*  
*holy, that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth,*  
*and no man shutteth, that shutteth, and no man openeth*: with

this difference the word [*house*]  
omitted in the latter, and that advi-  
sedly, to distinguish betwixt the *Type*  
and the *Truth*, *Eliakim* and *Christ*;  
in *Him* resideth *regal power*, and *de-*  
*spotical*; in *Eliakim* *Ministerial*, and

*Oeconomical* onely, as *steward* of *David's house*; for that room  
he sustained, as appeareth 2 *King*. 18. By the delivering then  
of this *key*, *Peter* was made not a *Lord* over *God's inheritance*,  
but a *steward of the mysteries of God*: for our case was thus; As  
*Adam* was exiled and shut out of *Paradise*, so are sinners from  
heaven; and as *Paradise* was shut against him, so was heaven  
against them also, sin being the *embargo* betwixt us and hea-  
ven. Now what key shall sinners find to open heaven gate?  
God hath a *commanding key*, who onely hath authority to for-  
give sin, against whom it is committed; and so often as a sin-  
ner is pardoned, so often is heaven opened; this key God keeps  
to himself. 2. *Christ* hath an *excellent key*, which openeth

where

where no man shutteth; for by his merits hath this *Angel of the Covenant*, like *Peters Angel*, loosed our bands, and set open the Prison doors, enlarging the *Captives*, and not them onely, but the *Palace doors*, for by the blood of *Iesus we have boldness to enter into the holiest*; and elegantly it was said by *Tertullian*, his blood is the key of *Paradise*. 3. The *Apostles* had an *Oeconomical key*, as *stewards* in the *Lords house*, (for in *Princes Courts* the key is the ensign of that *Office*) because unto their trust is committed the *Ministry of Reconciliation*; of this key *Saint*

A<sup>cts</sup> 12. 7.

Heb. 10. 19.  
Sanguis Christi  
clavis Paradisi.  
Tert.

3. clavis Ministerii.

*Ambrose* thus; Behold sins are forgiven by the holy Ghost, but men contribute their *Ministry* toward the *Remission of sin*, but exercise no right of any power, for sins are not remitted in their names, but in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; they supplicate and pray, God grants and pardoneth; the service is from man, but the bounty from an higher power. So then the higher power is the key of authority; and the humane service is the key of *Ministry*. These several keys were well known to *Scorus*, who writeth thus; *Judicial authority* in censuring heaven to be open or to be opened to any man, or not, is understood in a threefold sense; 1. as the most principal and absolute, residing in God onely; 2. not as the most principal, but a very excellent authority, appertaining unto *Christ* by a double preeminence, which he hath 1. over all causes, as one who knoweth all mens hearts, and can judge thereof; 2. in the validity of his sentence, definitive, as ever just, and never to be repealed; which prerogatives can onely sort with him who knoweth how well or ill all men have deserved; (for heaven stands open and shut towards us accord-

Ecce quia per Spiritum Sanctum peccata donantur, homines autem in remissionem peccatorum Ministerium suum exhibent, non ius aliquis potestatis exercent; neque enim in suo, sed in Patris & Filii, & Spiritus Sancti peccata dimituntur, isti rogant, divinitas donat, humanum enim obsequium, sed Munificentia superna est potestatis. Ambr. l. 3. de Spir. S. cap. 19.

Authoritas judiciaria sententiandi cœlum huic aperiendum vel apertum esse, tripliciter intelligitur, 1. Authoritas simpliciter principalis, solius Dei, 2. Non Principalis, sed præcellens, solius Christi, quantum ad duplicem præminentiam, 1. unam quidem in universaliitate causarum judicandarum; 2. aliam in firmitate sententiæ definitive; & utraq; præminentia potest convenire illi, qui omnia merita, & demerita novit, quæ sunt causæ, propter quas cœlû est aperiendû, vel claudendû; habet etiâ voluntatē inseparabiliter conformem iustitiæ divinæ: propter primû potest in omnibus causis sententiaré, quia omnes novit; propter secundum potest ejus sententia simpliciter esse firma, & irrevocabilis, qui semper iusta, -- Non potest hæc clavis esse in ecclesia Militante, quia nullus in ecclesia novit omnes causas judicandas, nec habet voluntatem immutabiliter iustam, 3. Particularis quantum ad causas.

cognoscendas, & infirma quantum ad sententiam ferendam, puta quia ipsa fit aliquando revocabilis, si quando prae legem divinam judicat, potest esse in ecclesia una clavis eorum operandi, sc. auctoritas sententiandi particulariter, & non irrevocabiler eorum esset apertum. Sect. 1. 4. dist. 19. Sect. Haec secunda.

ing as our deserts are) as also in regard the will of Christ is, and ever was undividedly conformable to divine justice; for the first reason. He may be a Judge in all causes, who knoweth all things; and for the second, his sentence is firm, and irrevocable. b. cause alwayes just.

The militant Church is not capable of this key, because there is not any member in that Church endowed with so ample intellects, as to know all causes; nor hath a Will so confirmed in justice as therein to be immutable. 3. There is a particular authority to hear causes, but weak to give sentence, and is many times revocable, as pronounced besides the law of God; there may be then in the Church a certain key to open heaven, that is, the authority of sentencing in particular, and yet heaven not irrevocably open unto any. Thus much Scotus, from whose testimony clearly stream these deductions: 1. The Ministerial key in the custody of the Church is not so ample, and firm as that excellent key, which is upon Christ's shoulder, and those words, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*; relate to the certainty of the Commission, and not to the extent thereof. 2. That there is not in the Militant Church, (therefore not at Rome) such a key as can fit all wards, or such a Judge as can take cognizance of all causes; nor is there that Oecumenical jurisdiction intitling Rome above all, and unto all, nor do all causes turn upon that Rota. 3. That there is no mortal Judge either Ecclesiastical or Civil so confirmed in justice, but that he may swerve, and deviate from that rule. *Nullus in Ecclesia*, saith Scotus; In the Church, no, not one but hath a will subject to change: the Pope then that boasteth of the infallibility of his keys, either is not of the Church, or above it. And as this Schoolman hath expressed the differential properties of these keys; so a Canonist the several titles, and persons to whom they appertain. The key (saith he) is tripartite, 1. of Authority, and that is in the hands of God alone, who only forgiveth sins with authority. 2. Of Excellency, which the man Christ hath, inasmuch that he without the

clavis triplex,  
1. Auctoritatis,  
& istam habet  
solus Deus, qui  
solus dimittit  
peccata auctoritate.  
2. Excellentiae, quae  
solus homo Christi  
habet; in  
quantum esset  
sacramentorum potest dare sine  
Sacramentis. 3. clavis Ministerii, & istam clavam habent Sacerdotes,  
per quam ligant & solvunt. Raymond. sum. tract. 4. de Poenit.

Sacraments

*Sacraments can confer the effect, and benefit of the Sacraments.*

3. Of the Ministry, and this key is in the custody of the Priests, by virtue whereof they bind and loose. The Church then must rest contented (and good cause she hath so to do) with this Ministerial key; for the first authentical key, *posuit pater in potestate sua*, the Father hath put in his own power; for the excellent key, *omnem potestatem dedit filio*, he hath given that power to his Son; and for the Ministerial key, *habemus thesaurum istum in vasis fictilibus*, we poor Clergy-men are rich in this treasure, the vessels containing the same are earthly, but the key is from the Lord, and heavenly, the excellency of this power is from God, the Ministry from us onely. And that we may

2 Cor. 4.7.

not be thought to accomplish any thing as from our selves, but that every one who seeth it may say, it is wholly of God; nipping withall the false Apostles, who ascribed all unto themselves, as Theophilus piously admonisheth. And indeed we need not be ambitious of further dignities, God having highly honoured our Order with this depositum, for to which of the Angels said he at any time, To thee will I give the keys, &c. and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, &c. He hath made his Angels spirits, by nature, above Priests, but his Ministers a flame of fire, by office far above them.

The key of Plenary power is in Gods own hands, but the key of subordinate Ministry is by him granted to the Church, and exercised by persons specially deputed thereunto, and imports a power of letting in and shutting out from the house of God. Christ is the door, and they are the door-keepers, an office of no mean place, who may say truly with the Prophet, I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. And in executing of this Office, they must not be partial, in letting in or leaving out whom they please,

Καὶ μὴ ἡμεῖς νομιζόμεθα καλῶθῆναι ἐξ ἑαυτῶν τί, ἀλλὰ πάντες οἱ ὁρώντες, ὡς Θεὸς λέγωντι εἶναι τὸ πᾶν. Αἰνίτληται ὁ τῶς ψευδαποστόλων ὅτι ἑαυτοῖς τὸ πᾶν ἐπέγχερον. Theophil. Com. in 1 Cor. 4.

Ἐξουσίαν ἔλαβον, ἢν ἔτε ἀγγέλοις, ἔτε ἀρχαγγέλοις ἐδόκεν ὁ Θεός, ἕως πρὸς ἐκείνους ἔρχεται, Ὅσα ἀν δῆσειτε, &c. Chrys. περὶ ἱερῶν. βιβλ. δ.

*Ignem veni mittere in terram.* Luke 12.

*Est potestas intrinmittendi & excludendi; Qui enim clavem alicujus domus habet, quem vult intrinmittit, & quem vult, ab ingressu domus repellit. Zegedin. loc. com. pag. 161.*

but in whom they see cause; nor promiscuously at hap-hazard, without any notice of their deserts, but upon mature deliberation, and scanning of their worth that pres to be admitted.

*Clavis dicitur potestas judicandi in foro anime, non corporum, & hæc potestas judicandi integratur ex duobus, sc. ex potestate discernendi in causæ examinatione, & definiendi in causæ terminatione per sententiam condemnatoriam, vel absolutivam: prima potestas appellatur Scientia, secunda potentia. Linwood de potest. eccles. cap. Seculi Principes, verb. Clave potestatis.*

*Dicuntur claves pluraliter propter plures Clavis effectus. Januensis.*

Not amiss therefore the *Schoolmen* and *Canonists* describe the *key*, to be a power of judging in the *spiritual Court* of the *Soul*, and *Conscience*, which *judicial power* consists of two parts, 1. the power of discerning in the examination of the cause. 2. and of defining in determining the same by a final sentence absolving, or condemnatory, whereof the former is knowledge, and the latter power; which some pro-

pose as two distinct keys; Others but as two distinct effects from one and the same key. By the first the Priest taking notice to whom he is to open and shut: and by the latter actually opening, and shutting unto any as they may deserve. Now the key is a type of this Ministerial power; for as a key openeth the door by unlocking thereof, and so removing the obstacle that hindreth entrance: So doth the Priest by virtue of his office, take away the obstacle, i. e. the guilt of sin, by absolving a Penitent from the same, which otherwise would hinder his admission into the Kingdome of God. This I say he doth not by his own power, but by reason of his place; absolving whom God absolveth, and setting at liberty whom he hath made free; as the Jaylor enlargeth the Prisoners, whom the Prince hath pardoned.

Here the better to acquaint our selves with these proceedings in the Court of the Soul, we are to know, how there is

*Duplex Ecclesiæ forus, unus secretissimus, in quo idem est accusator & Reus: alius forus publicus quia Ecclesia habet auctoritatem corrigendi delicta publica, ibi etiam requiritur duplex auctoritas, quia ad quodlibet iudicium requiritur cognitio in causa illa, & sententia, istæ autem auctoritates pertinentes ad forum publicum dici possunt claves. Scotus lib. 4. dist. 19.*

first an *Ecclesiastical Consistory*, where public sins of that cognizance are censured by the *key of Jurisdiction*. 2. There is likewise a *Penitential Court* for secret sins, where the same party is both the accuser, and accused; the *Penitent* arraigning himself upon hope of pardon, and the *Priest* absolving



solving upon presumption of Repentance. Now in this (as in other Courts of Judicature) though otherwise distinct in the subject matter, in the infliction of punishment, and making of satisfaction; yet all agree in one forme of proceeding, viz. 1. in the cognizance of the cause; 2. and next in the denouncing of judgment, where publick causes require publick evidence, publick sentence, and so publick execution: but private sins are otherwise argued and censured; *Whereas in the Court*

*of Conscience the Penitent comes voluntarily in, confesseth his offence, with a sorrowful heart, and purpose of amendment, and submits himself to the judgment of his Confessory. Dio Ecclesia, tell the Church, must in no case be observed in the first place,*

*Judicium in foro anime, seu penitentia, presupponit ipsum penitentem per propriam confessionem cum animo contrito, & satisfaciendi proposito, sui Confessarii iudicio se submittentem. Apolog. pro Jure Principum. pag. 171, 172.*

and in many cases not at all: So in *Secular Courts* the fact is questioned, in *Ecclesiastical* the same, and in the Penitential secret offences, whereof there is no evident fact, or fame, save the confession of the Penitent, and these come under the key of Order, or Absolution. The first key then, (or rather the first act) is the discerning betwixt good and evil, and betwixt evil and evil; for as in the skies one starre differeth from another in glory; and as in diseases there is a distinction in noysomeness, and danger, so in sins there is a difference in shame and guilt. How then can a blind Judge discern of colours? Here then is the necessity of the key of knowledge, which if not a distinct key, concurrerth certainly to the true use of the key; for though justice be blind, the Judge should not be so: Besides, there is *Scientia qua*, and *Scientia quae*, the 1. object, 2. and habit of knowledge. The word of God is *Divinum Scibile*, and in it self a key too; for by the word of reconciliation doth the Minister absolve, as shall be said hereafter; but that referreth to the applied act of this power, and exercise of this key, rather than to the power it self. The knowledge here must be inherent, wherby the understanding of the Priest is sufficiently enlightned, to distinguish betwixt light and darkness, as also to determine of Leprosies according to equity, and to apprehend

*Si Dei. Triplex 2 Ec- forum 3 Scie. 3 Sui.*

*De foro hominis dicit Apostolus, Si nosmet ipsos judicaremus, &c. Raymund. supra.*

*I. Clavis discretionis.*

*Recta determinatio rationis inter verum & falsum.*

*Quae consistit in apprehensione rei ut res est. Apol. pro jure Princip. pag. 173.*

hend the thing as it is, and not most times as it appeareth. Yet again, this habitual knowledge although so requisite for all

*Clavis Scientiæ non est aliqua Scientia habitualis, vel actualis, vel discretio q. æquæ, sed authoritas commissæ, quæ cæ uti videntur ad claudendum, vel aperiendum. — Authoritas cognoscendi etsi requirit Scientiam, vel discretionem concomitantem rectum usum ejus, quemadmodum requirit clavis potestatis aliquam justitiam ad rectum usum sui; tamen sicut potestas judicandi non est justitia, immo potest esse sine justitia, ita potestas vel authoritas cognoscendi in aliqua causa potest esse sine cognitione aliqua. Scot. lib. 4. dist. 19.*

that, *is not the key which is the authority it self committed to the Priests for opening and shutting; whereby they have power to make inquisition into and examine the case of the Penitent, as a man that standeth by, may know as much Law as he that sitteth upon the Bench, although he hath not a Commission to examine the truth of a cause then in question, according to his skill as the Judge hath, for, saith Scotus, that authority whereby the Judge possesseth himself with the true*

*information of the matter depending, although it may require skill, and discretion to manage the same aright, even as the key of power requireth justice in the right use thereof; notwithstanding as the power to judge is distinguished from justice, and may be found where there is no justice, (as in Pilat) so the power and authority to take cognizance of a cause, may sometimes be without any discretion, or science at all, (as in Festus, and Felix, Saint Pauls Judges) the gift then of knowledge, and understanding is not the key but the guide thereof, and the authority rightly placed, when a man of understanding is in place.*

2.  
*Clavis Potestatis.*

The Second is the Authority of censuring, or the *key of power*, which we call the *power of absolution* consisting in the solemn denunciation of the Sentence;

*Claves sunt discernendi scientia, & potentia judicandi, i. e. solvendi & ligandi, — usus harum Clavium, 1. discernere ligandos, & solvendo, 2. deinde ligare, & solvere. Magistr. l. 4. dist. 18.*

*Judicium sumitur prout significat actum judicis ut Judicis est; & jus dicit, i. e. juridicam sententiam pronunciat. Apol. pro Jure Princip. pag. 173, 174.*

for the former key which investeth the Priest with authority to *discern*, and examine between leprosie and leprosie, is but *preparatory*, maturing onely, and ripening the sinners case for sentence; *final determination* being the scope thereof; wherein the Priest after a full notice, and examination of the sinners case, and

comparing the same with the law of God, the *rule* to direct his *hand*, and *key*, judgeth according to that law, and pronounceth

nounceth the sentence judicial : I say as delegated from God, whose Commissioner for such causes he is, and proceedeth not as a *Witness* to give in Evidence ; nor as a *Herauld*, or *Crier*, or *Paraservant*, to make intimation of the *Magistrates* decree, as a *Messenger* onely, but as a *Judge*, though *subalternate*, clothed with authority from *Christ*, and *Christ* from his *Father* to give the sentence. *The Father* (saith

*Chrysostome*) hath given all power unto the Son ; and I see that they, (the Priests) to have been made partakers of all that power by the Son ; for witnes-

Πᾶσαν τὴν κρείσιν ἔδωκεν ὁ πατὴρ τῷ υἱῷ· ὁ δὲ ὅτι πᾶσαν αὐτῷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐξουσίας ἔσται τὸ υἱόν. *Chrys.* περὶ ἐκκλ. βιβλ. γ. *Tom. 6. p. 16.*

ses discover, and declare the fact, and Judges proceed according to their evidence ; for example, whether such a *Murder* were committed or no, the eye-witnesses are the evidence as present, and observing the fact, although the Magistrate denounce the sentence, and punishment. The Penitent then becomes a selfe-accuser and witness, and the Priest turns the key according to Gods law, whose Deputy and Steward in that case he is. Nor doth this power to be a Judge, contradict his office as a Minister ; for as *Magistrates* are the

(a) *Ministers* of God, and bear not the sword in vain ; so are *Ministers* the *Magistrates* of God, and bear not the keys in vain. But of this there will be occasion to say something in the exercise of this power, whether it be judicial or no. Onely thus, as the Magistrate is a temporal Minister, and the end of his power the preservation of publick peace and tranquility ; so is the Minister a Spiritual Magistrate, to procure the salvation of souls, and the enlargement of Gods kingdom : and as the Magistrates sword is *Terrestrial*, punishing evil doers, and protecting such as do well ; so is the Ministers key *Celestial*, binding the obstinate, and loosing penitent offenders. And it goeth well with Church and State when the Ecclesiastical Ministry, and Civil government keep the bounds God hath set them ; and in truth the mutual incroachments and confusions of these two powers, have been the occasions of all the alterations and commotions in *Christendome*. For as when the roof of the Temple rent in sunder, not long after followed the ruine of the Temple itself : So if these two principal beams, and Top-rasters, the

(a) Θεὸς δίδου·  
κινὸς ἐστίν.  
*Rom. 13. 4.*

Prince,

*Prince*, and the *Priest* rent asunder, the whole frame of Christian religion will be shaken. The abuse of the keys hath occasioned the Civil Magistrate to abridge in some cases the lawful use thereof; and when the Church men began to use them like swords, the Sword men seized upon them as belonging to their Regiment. Know then (O Priest, what the inscription is that is ingraven upon thy keys; *They are the keys of the kingdome of heaven*, and remember that he who gave the keys to *Peter*, said unto the same man, *put up thy sword into thy sheath*. And let the Magistrate be afraid to draw too near unto this holy ground, to handle the *Censer*, and approach unto the *Altar*; or to Usurp upon the true function of the keys, which appertain not unto them, but unto the Priests that are consecrated, lest they participate in the judgment and leprosie of *Uzziah*. As the Spiritual keys are of the kingdome of heaven, because they open and shut the same to different offenders; so are they of *Death* and *Hell* too, from the dire effects thereof, to such as are impenitent; for *Hell* hath gates as well as *Heaven*, and the same key that shutteth Heaven-gates openeth *Hell*; and where the gates of heaven are opened, those of hell are shut. Now heaven is opened and hell shut, when a sinner is loosed and absolved; in like manner hell is opened, and heaven shut when a sinner is bound, and his sins retained. The next thing we are to consider, *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, &c.*

2 Chro. 26. 16.

Revel. 1. 18.

2 Of Absolu-  
tion.  
Cligation.

Esay 22. 22.

Rev. 3. 7.

It had been more correspondent to the Metaphor, and use of the keys to have used the termes of opening and shutting, as did *Esaius* the Prophet, and *John* the Divine; but the Holy Ghost hath chosen to expresse this power under the words of binding and loosing, to signifie the miserable state of such to whom

Nempè ut intelligamus quam misera sit conditio illorum, quibus Cælum clauditur-- maneat enim obstricti peccatorum vinculis: Contra verò quàm beatè sunt illi, quibus apertum est cælum, qui scilicet à filio Dei liberati sunt, & sint ipsius coheredes. Beza Annot. in Matth. 16.

heaven is shut up, as remaining bound with the cords of their own sins; and contrariwise, the blessed condition of those to whom heaven is opened, as freed by the Son of God, that they might be coheirs with him, as learned *Biza* conj:tureth. Add hereunto ano-

ther reason, to make the guilt of sin better known; which is an obligation to punishment, and an obstacle unto happines;

now

now the key in opening the door, doth put back the bolt, and bar wherewithall it was held, and God by the ministry of his Priests removes this bar, and pardons this guilt, which hath shut up the kingdome of heaven against us.

Abolution presupposeth binding, as enlargement restraint; we are then in the first place to distinguish betwixt the bonds of sin, and the bonds for sin; for with the bonds of his own sin is a sinner captiv'd; this is the bondage and desert of sin, and so is he bounden for his sins by the doom and sentence of Gods Ministers, which is the punishment, and Ecclesiastical censure.

1 Peccati  
2 Propter peccatum.

Deus ipse solvit à peccati macula, m'ntis caligine, & à pœnis debito. Magistr. lib. 4. dist. 18. Esay 5. 18. Prov. 5. 22.

'Tis the grace of God onely which looseth the bond of sin, and the power of the keys that absolveth from the censure. The Prophet acquaints us with the cords of vanity, and a cart-ropes of sin; implying the worse than Egyptian bondage of a sinner; and the wise man, who had great experience of these bonds, saith, his own iniquities shall take the sinner himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sin. God shall not greatly need any

Lictors, or Tormenters, or to say bind him hand and foot, for the sinners own offences shall perform that office, and the knot fastening these bonds is the habit, and custome the sinner hath gotten to do evil, fast binding and fettering him from all good actions; the weight whereof presseth so sore, and the Chaines are so strong, that the arme of God onely must alleviate the one, and break the other in sunder. These bonds Richardus maketh

of two sorts, culpable and penal; by the first a sinner is bound with the bonds of Captivity, and by the latter he is liable to the debt of eternal death; both these obligations are upon him, because sin is an offence against an eternal and infinite Deity, and both these obligations he onely cancelleth that is omnipotent and can do all things. Another laicth a threefold bond upon a

sinner, the bond of sin, the bond of eternal punishment, and the bond.

Domino vinculis aliqui, & apparitoribus, vel tortoribus, qui cum ad supplicium rapiant, nil est opus, cum suis ipse peccatis constringatur, quò minus pœnam effugiat. Mercer. Comment. in Prov. 5.

Non potest faciliter operari bonum propter habitum vitiosum inclinantem ad contrarium. Lyra in Prov. 5.

Est obligatio per quam homo obligatur ad cultum, & alia per quam ad pœnam; in uno obligatur vinculo captivitatis, in altero debito damnationis. - homo namque ejusmodi vinculis obligatum solus ille solvere potest, qui v're omnipotens & omnia potest. Rich. de Clav. c. 2, 3.

*Peccans mortaliter statim ligatur, 1. vinculo culpæ; ab hoc absolvit cum solus Deus. 2. Vinculo pænæ æternæ, ubi Sacerdos absolvit, id est, absolutum ostendit. 3. Vinculo satisfactionis, ubi commutat pœnam æternam in temporalem. Expos. cum Gloss. in Matth. 16. MS.*

*bond of satisfaction; in the first case God only granteth absolution, in the second the Priest absolveth; that is, sheweth whom God hath absolved; in the third the Priest absolveth by binding, or by commutation, freeing the*

*sinner from eternal pain, and obliging him to satisfactory Penance. The two former ways we well allow of, but are scrupulous concerning the latter, by reason of the too much abused handling of satisfactions, and commutations, as not ignorant who it is, that hath pacified his Fathers wrath, and by whose stripes we are healed; and that we receive not the grace of God by way of exchange, but from the free charter of mercy, though we hold it very reasonable, that where any person is wronged, or the Church scandalized, satisfaction may justly be imposed; and herein we distinguish betwixt the satisfaction*

Satisfaction { expiatory.  
                  { vindictive.

and { propitiatory, in Christ.  
      { probatory, in Christians.

*of revenge and of expiation, 1. Satisfaction expiatory is, when the sin is blotted out, the sinner pardoned, and God reconciled; 2. and vindictive when the guilt remaineth, the sinner is punished, and God revenged; the expiation was performed by him who trod the wine-press*

*alone. Christ Jesus. The Revenge if eternal is executed upon such whose sins are not washed in the blood of that Lamb. If temporary, upon the Lords own servants, not thereby to make an amends to the justice of God, but to make an amendment in the Penitent. For instance, in David God put away his sin, but not the sword, that was unsheathed all his time. Now this Expiation, or temporary penance inflicted upon any, either by the censure of the Church, or voluntary by the delinquent himself, no more prejudiceth that plenary, and expiatory satisfaction made by Christ to his Father for believing sinners, than the just infliction of temporary punishment by the Magistrate upon Malefactors; where a pardon may come from God, and*

*In foro mundano peccata quatenus sunt contra bonum pacis publicæ, subtrahuntur potestati politice, per quam judicari, & poenis publicis puniri debent: & in foro Ecclesiastico quatenus sunt offensa Dei, & salutis Spirituali nocent, subsunt potestati Ecclesiæ. Apol. pro jure Princip. pag. 178.*

judgment



judgment be executed by the Magistrate for one and the same offence: God himself both ratifying the temporal punishment, and remitting the eternal. Thus we have seen the obligations, let us now come to the absolutions: And herein we must carefully distinguish what God doth by himself, and what he doth by his Minister; what God hath in his own power, from that power given by him to his Priests: and the better to keep this distance, we will lay down these assertions:

To forgive sins *efficienter*, that is, to be the true and proper cause of Remission, is a prerogative appertaining to God onely. *Affertion 1.*

Absolution from sin then directly cometh from him alone; *Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity?* therefore when Christ made bold with this power, claiming the same by virtue of his Godhead; the Scribes said within themselves, *this man*

Isay 43. 15.

*blasphemeth*, by usurpation upon the privilege of the most High; for they held it no less than blasphemy for man to forgive sin; which our Saviour denied not, intimating withall that he might without blasphemy exercise that power, who sustained in one person both God and man; thereby

Matth. 9. 3, 4.

(saith Irenæus) *did Christ both cure the man, and manifestly discover who he was.* And Chrysostome observeth, that hereby Christ shewed himself to be God equal to his Father; otherwise he would have said, *why do you attribute unto me an unfitting opinion? I am far from that power.* And proved himself further to be God, because he saw their thoughts; and by many passages of holy writ it is evident, that God onely be- holdeth what man beareth in mind.

*Peccata igitur remittens, hominem quidem curavit, semetipsum autem manifestè ostendit quis esset.* Irenæ. l. 5. adv. hæ. cap. 7.

Καὶ τοιγὰ ἐν μὴ ἴσθ' ἡν, ἔχοντι ἐπ' αὐτῷ, τί μοι περὶ αἰεὶς μὴ περὶ κούσαν ὑπόληψιν: πόρρω ταύτης ἐγὼ τῆς δυνάμεως· διὰ πολλῶν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ὅτι Θεὸς μόνος ἐστὶ τὰ κατὰ διάνοιαν ἐκτελεῖν. Chrys. hom. 29. in Matth.

Infomuch that as none but God can know the thoughts of men, so none but he can forgive the sins of men; the like collection maketh his Scholar and abridger, Theophylact upon Mark 2. 5. And Athanasius maketh this power to forgive sin not the least of his arguments to prove Christ to be God. A truth that shined so clearly in the Fathers dayes, that it was not altogether overcast, when the Schoolmen sate at the sterne. Peter Lombards

Μόνος γὰρ Θεὸς τὸ ἀφιέναι ἀμαρτίας. Theoph. in Mar. 2. 5.

Athan. orat. 3. contr. Arrian.

*Solus Deus maculam peccati abstergit, & a debito mortis æternæ absolvit. Lib. 4. dist. 18. Obligationem culpe solus Dominus solet & valet dissolvere. Rich. de Clavib. cap. 3.*

hard's conclusion is, God alone washeth away the spot of sin, and absolveth from the debt of eternal death: and Richardus who gives the Priests more than their due, herein abridgeth not God of his, but confesseth, how God onely is wont and able to dissolve the obligation of sin; that's a reserved case, in a point then confessed on all hands we will make no longer stay.

**Affertion 2.** The Priest substituted by God, and in his name absolveth from sin, 1. applicative, 2. and dispositive; first, by applying unto the Penitent the promises of the Gospel, and assurance of pardon.

Priest absolveth } applicative. first, by applying unto the Penitent the promises of the Gospel, and assurance of pardon.  
} dispositive.

And how welcome the Messengers of peace are, a distressed Conscience can best declare; to whom these *Doves* after an inundation of sin and sorrow, are ever accepted with olive branches in their mouthes. Although Christ the good Samaritan putteth wine and oyle of pardon into our wounded hearts by the finger of the holy Ghost, yet great comfort we receive in the further assurance thereof, plighted by the Ministry

Ἰουχὺς νοσέουσ ἰαλὸς σοφὸς λόγος, inquit ille, ego etiam dixi Ἰουχὺς ὑγιαίνουσιν quod & in corporis morbis usu cœvenit, ut qui se sentit jam convalescere, magnopere præterea audito peritorum Medicorum iudicio confirmetur. Bcz. de Excom. contr. Erasmus.

of a godly Priest. A discreet word is the physician of a languishing soul, said he, but I say of a soul in health; which is seen usually in bodily diseases, where a man sensible of his own recovery is much confirmed therein, upon the hearing of the judgment of skilful Physicians.

Great was the consolation David felt upon those words of Nathan, The Lord hath put away thy sin: hence riseth the first sense, and apprehension of spiritual joy; for remission of sin, and the acceptance of a sinners person in the beloved, are in God actions immanentes, & nihil ponunt in subiecto, actions alwayes inherent in God, without any touch in the penitent; as Paul was a chosen vessel long before he was cleansed, and knew not so much, till Ananias gave him some light thereof; but are then transient and sensible, when the Minister brings news thereof to a sinner that repenteth. God in Christ hath reconciled the world unto himself, quantum ad rei veritatem, truly and really; and he hath committed unto

unto us the word of reconciliation, *Quoad veritatis evidentiam*, to evidence and make known the same by the due application thereof unto a contrite heart. There cannot be a greater thing committed to the Priests charge, and peoples comfort, than *διακονία τῆς κατ'αλλήλων*, the Ministry of Reconciliation. From Christ we come, whose Ambassadors we are, and unto you sinners now in hostility with him, and our instructions are to conclude a peace and reconcile you unto him. Good God!

how highly doth Paul magnifie his office! for Christs sake (saith he) are we Ambassadors, for we have taken his business upon us; in Christs stead therefore are we sent unto you, as if the Father by us did exhort you, who not only exhorted you by Christ, but, he being crucified, doth by us still exhort; as the Greek Scholia paraphrase upon the place: thus do Priests forgive, that is, apply the gracious promises of the Gospel unto the penitent, for who saith Ambrose) can forgive sins but God alone? yet doth he forgive by them also, to whom he hath given power to forgive? And to this purpose *Ferus*, Although it be Gods proper work to forgive sin, yet the Apostles are said to remit also, not simply, but because they apply those means whereby God remitteth sins, which are his Word and Sacraments; and this is the first manner after which Priests remit sins, by way of application.

The second sense wherein the Minister of the Gospel absolveth from sin, is *dispositivè*, as an instrument fitting and preparing, by divine helps and means, a sinners heart so, as God in Christ Jesus may be merciful unto him, and so the sin is cancelled by the Ministry of the Priest, or rather by divine virtue assisting therein; for we are not to imagine that these choice graces, salvation and remission of sins, are promiscuously thrown open unto all; that indeed were to cast pearls before

᾽Ω πῦ ἰζηρε τὸ πρῶγμα, ὡς Χρῆς, φησι, προσβέουμεν, τὸ γὰρ αὐτῷ ἔργον ἡμεῖς ἀνεδεξάμεθα, ἀλλ' ἡ Χρῆς ἔν ἡμεῖς προσβέουμεν, ὡς τῷ πατρὶς παρακαλῶν. 1<sup>ο</sup> δι' ἡμῶν, ὅτε γὰρ διὰ Χρῆς μόνον παρακαλεῖ, ἀλλὰ τίτε σωραθῶν 1<sup>ο</sup>, δι' ἡμῶν οὖν παρακαλεῖ. *Oecumen. in 2 Cor. 5. pag. 639.*

*Quis potest peccata dimittere nisi solus Deus, qui per eos quoque dimittit, quibus dimittendi exhibuit potestatem? Ambros. lib. 5. Expof. in Luc.*

*Quamvis Dei proprium opus sit remittere peccata, dicuntur etiam Apostoli remittere, non simpliciter, sed quia adhibent media per quae Deus remittit peccata; haec autem media sunt verbum Dei & Sacramenta. Ferus in Joan. 20.*

*Remittit maculam peccati dispositivè, in quantum suo Ministerio afficit virtus divina quae peccata remittit. Sum Angel. verb. Claves n. 5.*

(?) *Donat* scit, *swine*.  
*perdere nescit.*  
 contrary to  
 O. ho. Tacit.  
 histor. lib. 1.

Luke 13. 3.

John 3. 3.

Acts 2. 37, 38.

Acts 4. 4.

1 Cor. 1. 21.

*Nunquam Deus non penitenti comminaretur, nisi ignoscere penitenti; solus hoc (inquit) Deus poterit, verum est, sed & quod per Sacerdotes suos facit, illius potestas est. Pacian. ad Sympron. Epist. 1.*

*Sacerdotes dimitunt ostendendo & manifestando; habent se ad modum demonstrantis. non directe, sed dispositive, — ea adhibentes per quæ Deus dimittit peccata & dat gratiam.*

(a) God knoweth how to give, not how to cast away his jewels. The Covenant of grace requiring some conditions to be performed on our part; for we read of two exceptions, 1. *except ye repent*, 2. *except ye believe*: Now unto both of these doth a Priest by the power of his Ministry render a sinner well disposed: For the first, *Peters Sermon* wrought so effectually upon the peoples hearts, that they were pricked therewith, and said *unto him and the rest of the Apostles*, Men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Where there is 1. preaching, 2. next compunction, 3. then Repentance, 4. afterwards Baptisme, 5. and lastly, remission of sins, atchieved by *Peters Ministry*. And for the second condition, that faith is engendered this way, is more than evident; for who hath not heard of that of the Apostle, *Fide ex auditu*? And many of them which heard the word believed; the increase and addition made daily to the Church, was by the Apostles planting, and watering; 'tis true the efficacy is from God, for neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase. His the seed is, the Minister is but the sower, or rather the hopper where it is deposited; and as the seed is his, so is the blessing and increase; the Priest concurring as a servant in this Spiritual husbandry, is pleased God by the foolishness of preaching (as the world accounted it) to save them that believe.

Conclude we with *Pacianus*, God would never threaten the impenitent, except he were minded to pardon the Penitent. But (it will be said) God onely can do this; very true, but that which he doeth by his Priests is his power. And to these two heads, of disposition and application, the more ancient Schoolmen limited

the power of absolution, preaching forgiveness not directly, and from themselves, but as disposing thereunto; exhibiting those means by which God conferreth grace, and forgiveth sin. By the Word and Sacraments doth the Priest dispose and prepare sinners for repentance, thereby to make

make them capable of forgiveness, and doth actually apply unto such as are so disposed, absolution and forgiveness; first chafing and preparing the wax to receive the seal, and when their hearts are like wax melted in the midst of their bowels, as saith the Psalmist; then as Officers they put a seal to the diploma of their pardon and absolution, in the name of Christ actually absolving them so far as their Ministerial power can extend; them I say *qui non ponunt obicem*, that hinder not by unbelief or impenitency: So the Minister in the first place disposeth to repentance, and then applyeth pardon to them that repent; and as it appeared in Davids case, upon whom the reproofs discharged by Nathan fell like claps of thunder; the King thereupon truly humbled to repentance, breaks forth into tears and confession, which Nathan apprehending, comforts him with the sweet news of pardon and absolution.

Psal. 12. 14.

2 Sam. 12. 13.

And this is all we can safely afford unto the Priest, whose care must be not to exceed his instructions, and to take that which is his own, and to go his way. Thou wilt say, the words of his Commission give him further and more ample authority, wherein the Priest hath power not to apply meerly, but to absolve; not to bear witness, but to bind; and so far, that Heaven shall not onely ratifie and confirm; but second and answer his definitive resolves; upon which surmise Hilary thus addresseth himself to Saint Peter; O blessed Porter of heaven, to whose disposing the keys of that eternal entrance are delivered, whose judgment upon earth doth prejudicate that authority which is in heaven, that whatsoever is bound or loosed upon earth, the same statute should be of force in heaven also. And Chrysostome affirmeth, the Priests throne to be founded in heaven, and he that averrith the same is the very king of heaven himself saying, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, &c. What can compare or be equal with this honour? heaven takes the principality, or begin-

O Beate Cæli janitor, cuius arbitrio claves æternæ aditus traduntur, cuius terrestre iudicium præiudicata auctoritas sit in cælo, ut quæ in terris aut ligata sunt, aut soluta, statim ejusdem conditionem obtineant in cælo. Hilary Can. 16. in Matth.

Ὁ τῆς ἐξουσίας θεῖον ἐν τοῖς ἀγγελοῖς ἰδρυταί· τίς ταῦτα φωνεῖ; αὐτὸς ὁ θεὸς ἀγγέλων βασιλεὺς, Ὅσα δὲ γὰρ δήμελε, &c. τὶ ταύτης ἴσον γένοιτ' ἂν τῆς τιμῆς; ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς κείρας λαμβάνει ὁ θεὸς, ἐπὶ δὲ ὁ

ning

κειτὸς ἐν τῇ γῇ καθύψαι· ὁ δεσπότης  
ἐπείκει πρὸ δούλου, καὶ ἄπας ἀνὴρ ἔστω κατω  
κείμενος, ταῦτα ἐκείνῳ ἄνω κυεῖν. Chrys.  
ἐν τῷ Ὁσέαν. λογ. ε. Tom 5. p. 152.

ning of judgment from earth. The Lord  
followeth his servant; and look what the  
servant judgeth below, the Lord con-  
firmeth above. For the clearing of  
these evidences there are three points

to be debated : 1. If the Priest can be said to be an author or doer of absolution. 2. How and when his sentence is ratified in heaven. 3. And then how, and in what sense these Fathers can rightly affirm, (and which the words of Christ seem to import,) The Priests censure on earth to have the precedency, and to take place of heaven; and to these the resolutions succinctly follow.

1. To the first, we affirm that the Priest doth discharge his function, not onely declaratively, as a Messenger, but operatively, as a causer, and procurer of absolution; but a Causer after his kind, because he laboureth in the work of the Ministry; such as take pains in planting and watering the Lords husbandry are Θεοὶ συνεργοί, labourers together with God. And as the Apostle styles himself a Father to the Corinthians, and that he begat them in Christ Jesus through the Gospel, though in the adoption of sons the seed be immortal, and the quickner thereof the holy Spirit; and as Timothy by his doctrine is said to save himself, and them that hear him, whereas salvation is from the Lord; So are the Priests said to absolve, as instruments ordained by God to work faith and repentance for the procurement thereof: for as in the binding part of their Ministry they are like the Angels in the Apocalypse, which pour out the vials of the Wrath of God upon earth, (a) having vengeance ready against all disobedience, and a charge from God to deliver up unto Satan; yet are they not the Avengers, (for to God vengeance belongeth) but the inflictors thereof, (for unto the Priests the execution appertaineth.) And in the Levitical Law which concerneth

the Leprosie, by so many of the Ancient made a type of the pollution of sin, we read the Priest shall cleanse him, and the Priest shall pollute him, and the Priest polluting shall pollute him; where we translate, the Priest so.

וטהר הכהן καθάρει αὐτὸν ὁ ἱερεὺς  
LXXI. I Levit. 13. 6. & vers. 44.  
וטהר הכהן טמא יטמא μίανσει μίαν-  
σει αὐτὸν ὁ ἱερεὺς. LXXII.



shall pronounce him clean, and the Priest shall pronounce him utterly unclean; for the Priest was not the author of that pollution, neither making him that had the Leprosie unclean, or him clean that was cleared thereof, but onely declared him to be polluted, (saith Saint Hierom) who before seemed unto many to have been clean. Now because Ministerial and subordinate causes work in the power and strength of the superiour and principal, the effect oftentimes is ascribed unto them who have the least finger in the business; and thus much to the first point.

For the second, the Priests sentence on earth is onely at such times ratified in heaven, when it proceeds according to heavenly directions, God leaving such judgments in the Church, gained by surreption or ignorance, unto themselves. It being a received maxim, that as the Judge of all the world cannot do otherwise but right, no more can or will he approve of any censure but what is just and righteous; that of Saint Augustine being true in this case also, that thing cannot be unjust where with the just God is pleased. And as the most ancient and learned of the Latin Fathers said of Nero, The man that hath any knowledge of him, cannot but understand that it was some great good that Nero condemned; So contrarywise, those to whom the justice and goodness of God is known, cannot be ignorant, but that the cause must of necessity be good and just which he approveth, and bad withall which he disasteth. Either suppose then the Priests sentence on earth to proceed alwayes according to equity, else not alwayes to be ratified in heaven.

In the third doubt there sticks a little difficulty, how binding and loosing on earth can precede and go before that which is in heaven; for those Fathers cannot be ignorant whose Deputy the Priest is, and by virtue of whose commission he proceedeth, That God absolveth upon contrition of the heart, and where contrition is not, the Priest absolveth but in vain; That as the Lepers were cleansed in the way in going to shew themselves unto the Priests, so sin is no sooner

*Haud dubium quin Sacerdos non quod contaminationis author sit, sed quod ostendat eum contaminatum, qui prius mundus plurimis videbatur.* Hieron. lib. 7. in Esay c. 23.

2.

*Non sequitur  
Dens Ecclesie  
iudicium, quae  
per surreptionē,  
& ignorantiam  
sepe iudicat.*  
Lomb. l. 4. dist.  
18.

*Injustum esse  
non potest, quod  
placuit iusto.*  
Aug.  
*Qui scit illum,  
intelligere potest  
non nisi grande  
aliquid bonum  
à Nerone dam-  
natum.* Tertul.  
Apolog. c. 5.

3.

*Non solum piissimā dispensatione Leprosi  
antequam ad Sacerdotes venirent, in via mun-  
dati sunt, ut & ipsi mundatorem suum cogno-  
scerent, & Sacerdotes nihil horum mundationi  
se contulisse sentirent; juxta verò Spiritualem  
intelligentiam, Leprosi antequam ad Sacerdotes  
repented.*

*veniant mundantur, quia non Sacerdotes, sed Deus peccata dimittit.* Haymo Dominic. 14. post Penrecost. pag. 401.

*Omnes concedunt quod per contritionem veram & sufficientem peccatum remittitur sine Sacramento in actu.* Gabriel. l. 4. dist. 14. Quest. 2.

Membyum { 1 prædeterminatione.  
Christi, 3. { 2 preparatione.  
                  { 3 concorporatione.  
Rich. de Clav. c. 10.  
Corde credens, & devotione  
servens ad baptisma festina-  
vit.

Rom. 5. 10.

repented of, but instantly the sinner by God is pardoned; how can then this Ministerial absolution take place of that powerful one of God? For answer whereunto these conditions must be premised; 1. The sinner that stands in need of Priestly absolution, hath his conscience perplexed and not quieted. 2. The sinner, before the Priest hath done his office, conceiveth hope onely of pardon from God, but no full assurance. But 3. upon the Priests application of mercy from the word of God, he receiveth comfort, his conscience is quieted, and he rests assured of forgiveness. And to these we must premise again for our better understanding, that many persons are members of Christ in election onely, as Paul before his conversion. 2. Many in election and preparation, as Saint Augustine a Catechumen, believing in his heart, and fervent in devotion, he made haste to be baptized. 3. And many in election, preparation, and admission, as reconciled penitents by ablution and absolution. This priority then is not in respect of Gods election, or preparation for mercy, but in respect of the actual and complete admission of the Penitent into his grace, and his sensible remonstrance thereof; for as the Divine purpose to save a Penitent was from eternity, so to remit his sins also; but in respect of the sinners first feeling and apprehension of mercy, (Gods goodness intended unto him by the Priests Ministry, being reduced into the outward act) Forgiveness may be first resolved upon in heaven, but first felt and apprehended on earth: *When we were enemies we were reconciled to God*, saith the Apostle, who was himself a Persecutor, and yet reconciled to God, and by him whom he then persecuted, *quoad veritatem*, but he reaped not the fruit thereof, was not sensible of this reconciliation, *quoad patefactionem, & salutarem ejus communicationem*; in respect of the manifestation, and saving communication thereof, till his Conversion. Now in regard a thing is said first to be, when it is first taken notice of, so a Penitent is then said to be first absolved, when the Priest maketh

maketh known the benefit, and the sinner groweth first sensible, and communicateth thereof; which because a sinner upon earth first apprehendeth, and God in his heavenly word alloweth of that apprehension, it remaineth that in this sense those sayings of the *Fathers* are to be allowed of; and thus much for the clearing of those doubt.

The premisses considered, the distinction is easily made betwixt the power of absolution which God exerciseth by himself, and by his servant; for from God is the *Primitive and original power*, the Apostles power is merely *derived*; that in God *Sovereign*, this in the Apostles *dependent*; in him *onely absolute*, in them *delegate*; in him *imperial*, in them *Ministerial*. Nor do the *Bishops and Clergie* forgive sins by any absolute power of their own, (for so onely Christ their Master forgiveth) but ministerially, as the servants of Christ, and Stewards, to whose fidelity their Lord and Master hath committed his keys; and that is, when they do declare and pronounce, either privately, or publicly by the word of God, what bindeth, what looseth, and the mercies of God to penitent sinners, and his judgments to impenitent and obstinate persons. They then do remit sins, because Christ by their Ministry remitteth sins, as Christ by his Disciples loosed Lazarus. And the Ancients have made the raising and loosing of Lazarus, and the cleansing and admitting of the Lepers into the Camp, a Type of the power residing in God, and of the authority he hath given unto man. And as Christ by his power made Lazarus alive, and the Apostles onely loosing his bonds, set him free; so it is the grace of God which revives and justifies a sinner. The Priests publishing his liberty, whom the son of man hath made free. In like manner the cleansing of the Lepers was Gods doing; the Priest serving onely to discern what God hath already done, and to pronounce the same. Richardus herein saith well, though not alwayes well; We are diligently to distinguish what God doth by himself, and what he doth by his Minister; by himself he raised the dead, by his Minister he loosed him that was bound; by himself he cleansed the Leper, by

*Ministri peccata remittunt non a se, sed a Deo.*

*Pract. of Pietie,*  
pag. 758.

*John II. 44.*

*Distinguamus diligenter quid Dominus faciat per semetipsum, & quid faciat per Ministerium suum: per semetipsum resuscitat mortuum, per Ministros solvit ligatum; per semetipsum mundat Leprosum, ministerio Sacerdotis reducit eictum: Mortuum resuscitare, Leprosum mundare, ad idem videtur referre, nam utroque solvitur obligatio culpe; sed*

Hh

the

& viaticum solvere, vel rejectum educere, ad idem nihilominus videtur respicere, quoniam utrovisque sequitur obligatio panis. Leprosus mandatur, quando percussus quisque pravitate sue sordibus divinitus exauitur. Mortuus resuscitatur, quando peccato captivatus ad bene vivendum divinitus animatur. Post emundationem leprae (Sacerdotali officio interveniente) ejectus prius in sua reducitur, — infestis involutus, & à Domini Ministris abire, & ad sua redire permittitur, quando per absolutionem, & consilium Sacerdotis ad vitæ novitatem reformatur. Rich. de Clavibus cap. 18.

the Ministry of the Priests he r. Stored him that was cast out: To raise the dead and to cleanse the Leper have respect unto one and the same thing, for in them both the obligation of sin is loosed; so also to loose him that was bound, and to restore him that was cast forth, seem to be the same; for in both there followeth an obligation of punishment. The Leper is cleansed, when a sinner is by God stripped forth of the filth of sin. The dead is raised, when he

that was in bondage unto sin, is quickned by God to lead a good life. After the cleansing of the Leprosie (the Priests office intervening) he that was formerly cast forth, is restored; and he that was bound with grave-clothes, and loosed by the Lords Ministers, is permitted to depart, and return unto his own; When through the absolution, and counsel of the Priest, he is reformed unto newness of life. Thus much Richardus: where we plainly see that absolution in the hands of a Priest is but an enfranchising, not a reviving of a dead sinner; a reconciling, and not a cleansing of a leprous Penitent.

3.  
Spiritually.

The third way of absolution is, which a Penitent in some select cases, by the testimony of the Holy Ghost, pronounceth it upon himself; for remission of sins is the proper work of Gods Spirit; therefore Christ endowed his Disciples first with the Holy Ghost, and then with the power of remission and retention.

Hereupon saith Ambrose, He that cannot absolve from sin, hath not the Holy Ghost; the charge of the Holy Ghost is the Priests office, and the right of the Holy Ghost is in binding and loosing offences. Wherein observe

Qui solvere non potest peccatum, non habet Spiritum Sanctum: munus Spiritus Sancti est officium Sacerdotis, jus autem Spiritus Sancti in solvendis ligandisque criminibus est. Ambros. l. i. de Pœn. c. 4.

that Fathers distinction inter Spiritus Sancti munus, & jus: Absolution from the Priest to a penitent is munus Spiritus Sancti, the charge and office of the Holy Ghost; whereas the absolution from a penitent to himself is jus Spiritus Sancti, that right whereby the Holy Ghost testifieth unto his conscience that

that his sins are forgiven. Origen after his manner feeding up-

on an *Allegory*, understandeth by the *gates of hell, sins*, and maketh every *several vice* a *several gate*, and the *gates of the daughter of Sion* he makes the *contrary virtues*; as *intemperance* is a *gate of hell*, *temperance of Sion*, &c. and by the *keys* he will have meant the *pious practices* of each *virtue*: So by the *keys of Righteousness* and *temperance* are opened the *gates of Righteousness* and *temperance*:

*Our Saviour* conferring (saith he) upon such against whom the *gates of hell* prevail not, so many *keys* as there are *virtues*. According to this *Father*, a man by sinning shuts heaven gate, and sets hell gate open for his soul; and contrarywise by repenting, and practising such *virtues* as are opposite to his former vices, he shuts the *gates of hell*, and sets open for him those of heaven. To the same purpose saith *Saint Chrysostome*, (if that *Homily* be his, whereof his learned publisher doubteth;) *He hath given unto thee the power of binding and loosing, thou hast bound thy self with the chain of the love of wealth, loose thy self by an injunction of the love of poverty; thou hast bound thy self with the furious desires of pleasures, loose thy self with temperance; thou hast bound thy self with the misbelief of Eunomius, loose thy self with the religion embracing of the right faith.*

Thus God hath erected a *Tribunal* in the heart of man, his *Conscience* arraigneth him upon *Gods law*, as a *Transgressor*, and guilty of the breach thereof; but upon his confession, and detestation of the fact, the holy Spirit recreates and comforts him with the sweet voice, and promises of the Gospel, that his sins for *Christ's sake* are forgiven; kindling in his heart *faith*, whereby he is justified, and at peace

absolutio, aut absolutionis pronuntiatio. D. Twiss. de Permiss. lib. 2. part. 2. p. 434.

*Porte inferorum nominari possunt juxta species peccatorum, — Sion autem portæ intelliguntur contrariæ portis mortis; ut mortis quidem porta sit intemperantia, portæ vero Sion temperantia. — arbitror quod proutque virtutis cognitionis, aliqua sapientiæ mysteria respondentia generi virtutis aperiuntur ei qui secundum virtutem vixerit. Seruatore dante in qui superari non possunt à portis inferorum, totidem claves quot sunt virtutes. Origen.*

Σοὶ δέδωκε τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῷ δεσμεῖν καὶ λύειν· σάβλὸν ἔδησας τῇ σείρᾳ τῆς φιλαργυρίας, σάβλὸν λύσον τῇ ἐνδοχῇ τῆς φιλοπολείας· σάβλὸν ἔδησας τῷ διεσεῖν τῷ ἡδονῶν, σάβλὸν λύσον τῇ σωφροσύνῃ· σάβλὸν ἔδησας τῇ εὐνομίᾳ κακαπισίᾳ, σάβλὸν λύσον τῇ τῆς θεοδοσίας εὐσεβείᾳ. Chrys. hom. super Quacuq̃, &c. tom. 7. pag. 268.

*Justificatio in S. Scriptura aeternam quandam forensensem notat, qualis est*

with God : For what else is the justification of a sinner, but a pronouncing of his absolution? and this I call the *inward* and *Spiritual Absolution*.

And this is all, our Church guided with Gods word, and invested with this power, teacheth concerning *absolution*; the *Rhemists* confessing the use thereof in our Church. *That the English Protestants in their order of visiting the sick, their Ministers acknowledge and challenge the same, using a formal absolution according to the Churches order, after the special confession of the party; and for which it was even her happinels to have been accused by Schismaticks, being justified by the then gracious and learned Defender of her faith; for when Arch-Bishop Whitgift read unto King James the Confession in the beginning of the Communion-book, and the absolution following it, His Highness perused them both in the book it self, liking and approving them. And when the Bishop of London acquainted his Majesty with a more particular and personal form of absolution, prescribed to be used in the order for the visitation of the sick, the said particular absolution being read, his Majesty exceedingly well approved it, adding that it was Apostolicall, and a very good Ordinance, in that it was given in the name of Christ to one that desired it upon the clearing of his conscience. And herein the English Church is associated by her sister Churches of the Re-*

*formation. The Augustian Confession; The Church ought to impart absolution unto such as have recourse unto repentance; and that private absolution is to be retained in the Churches. The Church of Bohemia; All persons may specially crave absolution from the power of the keys, through the Ministry of the Gospel instituted by Christ, and may know for certain, that they obtain the same from their God. And when it is performed by the Minister unto them, they ought to receive it at their hands with confidence, as a thing*

*instituted by God, and serving for their profit and salvation, thereby enjoying*

Rhemist. Annotat. in Joan. 20. vers. 23.

Conference at Hampton-Court, pag. 12, 13. edit. 1625.

*Ecclesia redeuntibus ad penitentiam impertire absolutionem debeat. Harm. Confes. S. 8. & quid absolutio privata in Ecclesiis retinenda sit. lb. art. 12.*

*Absolutionem ex potestate Clavium & remissione peccatorum per Ministerium Evangelii à Christo institutum singuli expectere possint, & à Deo suo consequi se sciant; & quando hæc à Ministris eis præstantur, accipere ab his tanquam rem à Deo ad commodandum ipsis, & salutariter interveniendum institutam, cum fiducia debeant, & remissione peccatorum sine dubitatione frui, secundum verbum Domini, Cui peccata remisisti, remittuntur. Harmon. Confes. c. 5.*



enjoying beyond all question forgiveness of sin, according to the word of the Lord, whose sins thou forgiveest, they are forgiven. And the Saxon Church; We affirme the rite of private absolution to be retained in the Church, and we for many weighty causes constantly retaine the same. Of this belief absolution ought to admonish us, and to confirm the same; as David was upon the hearing of his absolution, The Lord hath taken away thy sin: so mayest thou perceive the voice of the Gospel to declare unto thee also forgiveness, which by name is proposed unto thee in absolution; Thou mayest not feign the Gospel to appertain nothing unto thee; but know that it is therefore set forth, that by this means, men by faith imbracing the Gospel, may be saved; and Gods commandment abiding for ever, and never to be removed, that thou mayest believe the same. So the Transmarine Churches herein lend us the right hand of fellowship.

And thus much for the power of loosing, the other part of Binding. their office and power is in binding. For the Lord (saith Ambrose) hath given the like power in binding, as in loosing, and hath granted the same upon the like condition; therefore he that hath not the power of absolution, hath not the power of ligation.

Thereby the Father refuting the Novatians, (Hereticks of his time, and of whom we shall hear some news anon) that arrogated unto themselves the power of binding, but not of loosing; and affirmed the Church to have power to cast out a sinner, but not to call in a Penitent; whereas both these properties are belonging to one key. The Church is armed with this power, though loth to strike, and never but in the case of necessity, the iniquity of men forcing her to use this weapon; it being not so natural to the Gospel, but accidental onely, to lock up sinners

hoc Evangelio esse accidentale, & quasi præter naturam. Calvin. harm. in Matth. 16.

Affirmamus ritum private absolutionis in Ecclesia retinendum esse, & constantè retinemus propter multas graves causas; de hac fide & confirmatione nos absolutio debet, & eam confirmare, sicut confirmabatur David, audita absolutione, Dominus abstulit peccatum tuum: ita tu scias vocem Evangelii tibi quoque annuntiare remissionem, quæ in absolutione tibi nominatim proponitur; non fingas nihil ad te pertinere Evangelium, sed scias id edictum esse, ut hoc modo salvetur hominis fide amplectentes Evangelium; & mandatum Dei æternum & immotum esse, ut ei credas. Art. 16.

Dominus par jus & solvendi voluit esse & ligandi, qui utrumque par conditione permittit; ergo qui solvendi jus non habet, nec ligandi habet. Ambr. l. 1. de pœn. c. 3.

Ligandi facultas, & mandatum Evangelii Ministris datur; quanquam notandum est

2 Cor. 10. 6.

Ἐν ὅλοιμ' ἔχομεν τὴν τιμωρίαν, ἀλλ' ἀναμίζ' ὁσίων ἡμῶν καλυόμεθα, ἵνα μὴ καὶ ὑμῶν ἀφίλει ἡ πληγὴ. *Theoph. in 2 Cor. 10 p 400.*

in their offences. And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, (saith the Apostle) when your obedience is fulfilled, q. d.

*Revenged of the false Apostles we could be, and would, but for that you which are obedient, are mingled with them, we forbear, lest some strokes might fall upon you also.* Where note, that this key

is turned upon the disobedient onely, and often respited for their sake who are obedient. This power of binding being rather *privative* than *positive*; for the guilt of sin binds the sinner over unto punishment, and the Priest is said to bind, when he finds no cause to loose those bonds. In-  
somuch that whether you respect the private exercise of these keys upon private notice of a sinners state, or the publick practice thereof in the Censures of the Church, the Ministerial power of binding is *declarative* onely, or applying Gods threats generally expressed in his Law, upon refractory transgressors. So upon the point the Priest is said to bind, when he looseth not; and as induration of the heart, blinding of the

eyes, stopping of the ears, &c. are not to be understood of God, as effecting and working the same, but permitting, and dispensing therewith onely. It being the usual guise of the Scripture to call the permission of God his effect and operation. So the Priest is said to bind when he permitteth onely (and that

Ταῦτα πάντα ἔχ' ὡς τὸ Θεῷ ἐνεργήσαντι — ἐκκλησίῳ, ἀλλ' ὡς τὸ Θεῷ παρὰ χάριν αὐτοῦ — τὴν ἐν παρὰ χάριν αὐτοῦ ὡς ἐνεργεῖαν, καὶ ποίησιν αὐτῷ λέγειν, συνηθὲς τῇ θεῷ χάριτι *Damasc. Orat. 1. 1. Βιβλ. δ. c. 5. pag. 127. Græc.*

upon just cause) the sinner to remain in the same pickle he found him. And as *Henry* the VIII King of England is reckoned of for the Founder of *Christs Church in Oxford*, because he *let it stand*; In that sense do Priests bind, leaving obstinate sinners standing upon the same termes they formerly did, in a fearfull expectation of Judgment, except Repentance come betwixt; that we need not make any longer stay upon this subject. The handling of this part, *viz.* the power of the keys in binding and loosening so at large, shall excuse the brevity of that which followeth to be considered in the other parts and members of this promise.

SECT.

## S E C T. II.

## The Contents.

*Peter seised of the keys to the use of the Church. Power of absolution conferred, and confined unto Priests. Laicks using the same not in case of office, but necessity, and where they are the parties grieved. Bonds of the soul, and sin onely, loosed by this key. The accomplishment, and actual donation of this power. God remitteth by the Churches act. The form of Priestly ordination. Heresie of the Novatians denying in the Church power to reconcile Penitents. Seed and bellows thereof austerity of those times. Absolution in the Priest not absolutely efficacious, but as relating to conditions in the Penitent: the Priest not secured from failing in the act of absolution. The erring key. Priestly absolution declarative, and demonstrative, and in a moral sense energetic. Judgments forinsecal are applied declarations of the Law to the fact. Absolution a Ministerial act, but powerful and judicial, but not Sovereign nor despotical. The spirit of judgment to discern, and determine, how necessary for Priests in the act of absolution. Fathers making Priests Judges of the Conscience. The exercise of the keys, 1. In the word of reconciliation; 2. In prayer; ancient formes of absolution expressed in a deprecative manner, not indicative; 3. In the Sacraments; 4. In interdictions, and relaxations of publick Censures. Keys abused.*

*bus* at Rome, *Dangerous to Sovereign Majesties, and Republicks. The superciliousness of Roman Priests in Usurping upon Divine right, subjecting the power of forgiveness in God to their arbitraments. Their preposterous way in absolving first, and afterwards in enjoining Penance. The feigned virtue of absolution Ex opere operato, destructive of piety, and penitency. Conditions requisite in the Penitent to be relieved by the keys, and lawfull use of absolution.*

3. Persons, *Tibi dabo.*

Ephes. 4. 11.

**I**N the next place it comes to be considered who the persons are to whom this Commission is directed; the Trustees to whose charge this power is deposited: Some throw it open too far, extending it to all Christians, which if so, what need of special offices and functions in the Church? *He gave* (saith the Apostle) *some Apostles, some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers.* Now if all are Pastors, and all Teachers, then not some; and if some are Apostles, and some Prophets, then not all. Others shrink it up, and confine it unto Peter; or if to his Successors, such as they appoint, entailing it upon those that sit in the *Chaire* at Rome. But if

*Hoc modo Ecclesie Apostolicæ census suos deserunt; sicut Smyræorum ecclesia habens Polycarpum à Joanne conlocatum refert; sicut Romanorum Clementem à Petro ordinatum edit. Te t. advers. hæres. præscrip. cap. 32.*

*Christus Apostolis omnibus post resurrectionem suam parem potestatem tribuit. Cypr. de unit. eccles. Universam significabat ecclesi. m. Aug. tr. 124. in Joan. Ecclesia quæ fundatur in Christo, claves ab eo regni celorum accepit in Petro, i. e. potestatem ligandi solvendi que peccata. Id.*

none but that *Chaire* be Apostolical, *Tertullian* was mistaken in affirming the *Chaire* of Polycarpus at Smyrna to be Apostolical, and instituted by John, as well as the *chaire* of Clements at Rome ordained by Peter; and Cyprian in writing, how Christ after his Resurrection bestowed the power upon all the Apostles; and Saint Augustine, that Peter at that time represented the whole Church; and a-

gaine, the Church founded upon Christ received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that is, the power of binding and loosing by Peter. And Theophylact, All they have the power of remitting, and

and binding that have obtained the sacred function of a Bishop, as well as Peter; for albeit, it was said unto Peter onely, I will give to thee, yet the keys were given to all the Apostles. It is the Inheritance of the Church to whose use Peter was seized of these

Ἐχουσι γὰρ ἐξουσίαν ἀφίεναι καὶ δεσμεῖν οἱ καὶ Πέτρον τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀφίεναι θέντες καὶ δεσμεῖν· εἰ γὰρ καὶ πρὸς Πέτρον μόνον εἰρήναι, τὸ δῶσα σοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀποστόλοις δίδομαι. *Theoph. in Matth. 16. p 94. Paris. 1635.*

keys, and the power executed by all that succeed in the function of Priesthood; nor can Peter boast herein to have been anointed with any oyl above his fellows. But withall as this oyl descended from Aarons beard to the skirts of his garment, so it condescendeth no further; for *omni, & soli sacerdotis*, to all the Priests, and to them onely, is this authority conferred, and confined. To this purpose the Oracle of our Divines, Bishop Andrews resolveth, the Apostles to be three wayes considerable; 1. as Christians in general, so it was said unto them, *Vigilate, watch*; 2. or else as Preachers, Ministers, Priests, so it was said, *Itē, prædicate, hoc facite, Go, and preach, and Do this, &c.* 3. or lastly as Apostles, and so personally, They were to be witnesses of his miracles, and Resurrection. Now the power of absolution was not peculiar to them as Apostles, nor common as Christians, but committed to them as Preachers, Ministers, Priests, and consequently to those that in that function and office do succeed them; yet not so committed unto them, as if God could not work without them, for *Gratia Dei non a'ligatur mediis*, the grace of God is not bound but free; can work without means of Word, or Sacrament, or Ministers either, but ordinarily this is an Ecclesiastical act, or course by him established, the Ministry of reconciliation to Ecclesiastical persons. And if God at any time vouchsafeth by Lay-men that are not such, they are *Ministri necessitatis, non officii*, in case of necessity Ministers, but by office not so. Hitherto are *Mentis aurea verba bracteata*, the grave resolves of that learned Prelate; at the feet of this Gamaliel we sit, and take these Dictates, 1. The Apostles received power to absolve as Priests and Ministers of the Gospel, and so those that succeed them in that calling. 2. That God can, and doth remit sins by himself immediately, without any subordinate means at all. 3. That this power conferred upon Ministers is an ordinary,

Serm. of Absolution.

Mark 13. ult.

and Ecclesiastical-aſt. 4. And that Lay men taking unto themselves this power are Ministers in case of necessity onely, and not usual, nor called to that office. Hereupon saith *Am-*

*Ius hoc solis permiffum eſt Sacerdotibus, re-  
ſte igitur eccleſia vendicat, quæ veros Sa-  
cerdotes habet.* Ambr. de Pœn. l. i. c. 3.

*broſe, This right is onely permitted  
unto the Priests, therefore the Church  
may truly pretend thereunto, that hath  
true Priests.* The Church then inclu-

deeth Priests, and Priests absolution. The poor Christians in the Vandalick persecution were sensible hereof, for when the Orthodox Clergie were exiled by the Arrians, the People casting themselves at their feet, cried out, *To whom will you leave us wretches, while you go forward to your Crown? Who shall Christen these sucklings in the font of the everlasting water? Who shall impart unto us the benefit of pnrance by reconciling, and indulgence, absolving us from the bands of our sins?* The Laity could not be in such distress, if the grace of absolution had not been inherent in the person of the Priests, and ready to go into banishment with them. Furthermore, the words of absolution cannot have the same power from the lips of a Lay-brother, as from them whom God hath made able *Ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the Spirit*; nor can it be imagined that Lay-men (though otherwise of great knowledge and piety) should do it with such efficacy, and assurance to perplexed Consciences, as they that are Gods stewards, and Ambassadors, and are called to that purpose. For as God hath given the Pastor a calling to baptize thee to repentance for the remission of sins, so hath he likewise given him a calling (a) and power, (b) and authority upon repentance to absolve thee from thy sins.— And as no water could wash away Naamans Leprosie but the waters of Jordan, (though other Rivers were as clear) because the promise was annexed unto the waters of Jordan; so though another man pronounce the same words, yet have they not the same efficacy and power to work upon the Conscience, as when they are pronounced from the mouth of Christs Minister, because that the promise is annexed unto the word of God in their mouths; So that what Christ decreeth in heaven in foro judicii, the same he declareth on earth by his reconciling Ministers in foro Pœnitentia. And to the same purpose Bica thus; *If thou turn over*

*all*

Victor Uti-  
cens. lib. 2.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

(a) 1 Cor. 4.

(b) 2 Cor. 10. 1.



all the Scriptures thou shalt no where find the words of binding, and loosing given unto any, but such as undergo the function of the publick Ministry, and truly that metaphorically in respect of the Divine and Spiritual power; for they are judicall words; and that law, or power belongeth as well unto general preaching had in the solemn assembly, or as applied to any of the flock in particular, according to the present necessity, or as it respecteth the publick censures of the Presbyserie. This may serve as a sponge to wipe away that aspersi-  
on of Bellarmine, cast upon us, to grant that a Lay-man, or woman, or boy, or infidel, or Parrot (if taught the words of absolution) may absolve, as well as the Priest. It being appropriated to that holy order in our judgment, and practice no lesse than with them at Rome. This is all we say, that in case a Lay-brother be offended, and he upon brotherly reconciliation remit the offence, the same also shall be remitted in heaven; but in case where God is wronged it concerns the Priests office, to pronounce the absolution, and Theophylact hath said the same; Not onely whatsoever Priests do loose are loosed in heaven, but whatsoever we also that are wronged either bind or loose, the same shall be either bound or loosed in heaven. And for which, the Divines of Colen assembled at the Council of Trent, thought him injured by those Fathers, as condemned in the X Canon there; and that the Protestants would triumph in the censure of such a Father. And in the same sense Beza subjoyneth; Although when one private man shall truly from Gods word, and out of love rebuke ano-

Si universam Scripturam evolvas, nunquam invenies verba ligandi, & solvendi alii quam publico Ministerio fungentibus; & quidem metaphorice Divine viz. & Spiritualis potestatis respectu tribui: sunt enim judicialia hæc verba; jus autem istud tum ad universalem prædicationem in totius gregis cætu, tum ad singulas oves, prout requirit necessitas, ac etiam particulares Presbyterii censuras spectat. Beza de Excom. contr. Eras. p. 60.

Non minus absolvere potest Laicus, immò etiam femina, aut puer, aut infidelis quispiam, aut Diabolus, vel etiam Psittacus (si concedatur ea verba) quàm Sacerdos, id concedunt adversarii. Bell. l. 3. de Pœn. c. 2. Sect. Quarto.

Ὁ μόνον ὅσα λύσιν δι ἐρεῖς, εἰσι λελυμένα, ἀλλ' ὅσα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι ἀδικοῦνθέν-  
τες ἢ δεσμεύμεν ἢ λύομεν, κακῶς ἔσαι δεδεμένα ἢ λελυμένα. Theoph. in Mat. 18. p. 106, 107.

Addunt Colonienſes, Theophylacti interpretationem Can. 10. damnatam, de qua Protestantes triumphaturi sunt. Concil. Triid. hist. lat. pag. 283.

Elſe quoties Privatus privatum ritè & ex Dei verbo, & Chriſtianâ caritate vel arguit, vel ſoluitur, neque hoc recipere alter dediga-  
tetur

zur, raturu est hoc etiam in caelis, secundum Theophylact. & Aug. tamen verbis ligandi, & solvendi, sacram & solennem actionem semper significari affirmo. Beza. contr. Eraft. pag. 61.

ther, and he take it not amiss, the same is ratified in heaven according to Theophylact, and Austin; yet I affirm in the words of binding and loosing, a sacred and solemn action ever to be si-

gnified. And thus much we teach, and thus much for the Lords Commissioners.

4. Object of the keys.

By this which hath been said, the fourth and last circumstance is transparent; that by whatsoever is meant, what sins soever. Peter received the keys from

Claves à Christo Regni caelorum accepit, i. e. potestatem solvendi ligandi, peccata. Aug.

Κλεῖδας ἡ νοῦσις τὰς δεσμέσας καὶ λύσας τὰς ἐν σφαλμάτων ἢ συγχωρήσεις, ἢ ἐπιτιμήσεις. Theoph. Expos. in Matth. 18.

Christ, that is, the power of binding, and loosing sins, saith Saint Augustine. Understand by the keys such as bind and loose, that is to say, either the pardons, or punishments of sins, saith Theophylact. For in the performance of this promise, wherein Christ made

John 20. 23.

good his word, after his Resurrection; and hereupon the Apostle saith, *who/e sins soever there*; and hereupon the Apostle saith, *The weapons of our Warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*. And bonds of that virtue as can fetter the soul, and a power so efficacious as to release them of

2 Cor. 10. 4.

\* Εχεις μὲν γὰρ οἱ κεκτῆνες ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸ δόσκει ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλὰ σώμάτων μόνον, ἐπὶ δὲ τῷ δεσμῷ αὐτῆς ἀπτεται τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ διαβαίνει τὸς ἑρανὲς. Chrys. ἐπὶ ἱερωσύνης. tom. 6. pag. 16.

spiritual bonds, *Earthly Princes* (saith Chrysostome) have power to bind but the bodies onely, but this bond (which the Priests have) reacheth to the soul it self, and extendeth unto heaven. Then that clause [whatsoever] is to be taken not in the full latitude thereof, but with a fitting limitation, and distribution, for no man doubteth but that Christ our Lord spake not of a binding at large, but of a certain determinate kind thereof; of the bond of Anathema, as the Gloss willeth, or a Spiritual tye, and of a superior order, as Suarez holdeth, from the bond of sin, and not from the bond of debt, as Jo-

Quodcumque non in tota sua amplitudine, seu cum distributione completa; sed cum quadam limitatione, seu cum distributione accommodata, (ut dicunt Logici) usurpandum est; nam non de quocunque ligamine, sed de certa tantum, ac determinata Christum Dominum loquutum esse, nemo ambigere potest; de vinculo Anathematis Glossa, Ligamen Spirituale, & superioris ordinis Suarez, & vinculo peccatorum non è vinculo debitorum. Joan. Paris. Apol. pro Jure Princip. p. 178.

hannes

hannes Parisiensis teacheth. Sin then, or the cords thereof are the *object* whereabout the power and ministry of the keys is exercised. And thus hast thou (Gentle Reader) the promise opened, and the Contents of this Commission.

I paise to the *performance* thereof, for without that all promises are but like *Ixiens cloud*, flattering our hopes for a season, but at last sending us empty away. Our God is faithful that hath promised, and will never cheat our expectation. The promise then was accomplished, when *Christ* said, *Receive the Holy Ghost, whose sins soever ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose sins ye retain, they are retained*: Wherein is a collation of the former power shadowed under the *Metaphor* of the *keys*, and of *binding*, and *loosing*; which being already sufficiently discussed, little remaineth to be spoken, save the weighing of the words, and the method how they are set, and placed. And so they are not onely a *concession* of authority in remitting, and retaining sins to certain persons, but a *ratihabition*, and confirmation of whatsoever they shall do in the lawful use thereof. The *Persons* therein mentioned are *three*, 1. the person of the *sinner* or penitent, in *Quorum, whose sins soever*; 2. of *God* in *remittuntur, they are forgiven*; but by whom? *God*, who in his own right pardons sins; 3. of the *Priest* in *remiseritis, ye, my Apostles and Ministers*: there are then *three* expressed, and where *three* are expressed, *three* are required; we cannot rend off one part of the sentence: If you leave out the *sinner* there is no work for *remission*; and if *God*, *remission* hath no force; and if the *Priest*, no ordinary application. It is Gods will and ordinance to proceed by the Churches *æc̃*, and to associate his *Ministers*, and to make them *workers together* with him; they cannot be more excluded forth of this than any part of their function; and to exclude them, is after a sort to wring the keys out of their hands, to whom *Christ* hath given them; and to account of their Ministry in *what sins soever they shall remit*, and of their solemn *sending* and *inspiring*, as if it were an idle, and fruitless ceremony. And so the *Persons* are distinct. Now the Confirmation of the *Priests* power is wonderfully expressed also, if we respect first the order, the *Priests remiseritis* standeth first, and Gods *remittuntur* second; whom.

The Redhibition of the promised keys.

John 10. 23.

1 Τίτων.

2 Ἀφίστα.

3 Ἀφῆτε.

John 20. 21.



same, whereas the Lord saith not so; Whose sins soever ye remit, (saith he) not whose sins ye shew, or declare to be remitted, are remitted unto them. The words then of our Commis-  
 sion we retain precisely, not challenging more than the Lord  
 hath given us, which were presumption, nor abridging his boun-  
 ty, which were in us either supineness, or ingratitude. And these  
 words solemnly pronounced by the Bishop, are still used, and  
 so ever have been; are still accounted, and so ever have been,  
 the very form, and soul of Priestly order, and institution;  
 thereby those Reverend persons exercise that branch of their  
 supereminent power, in conferring the holy orders of Priest-  
 hood, in begetting *Fathers*, not *Children*; *Masters*, not  
*Scholars* in the Church, as *Epiphanius* rightly; and this is the  
 word that *Spiritual seed*, whereby that *Paternity* is conceived,  
 and brought forth. And is it not a wonder that any son of this  
 Mother, any member of this Church, should envy this power,  
 or slight this gift, seeing the Ministers receive not this bene-  
 fit to their own use; put not this Candle under a bushel; lock  
 not up this treasure within their own coffers: But like the good  
 Scribe bring forth new, and old; as occasion serveth; and like  
 the faithful Apostle, *That which they received of the Lord deli-*  
*ver they unto you: Who then is Paul? or who is Apollio? but*  
*Ministers by whom ye believed.* You the people are Gods bus-  
 bandry, we the Clergie are labourers together with God. And  
 are you troubled at the seed we sow, or the implements of hus-  
 bandry we use, to make you a fruitfull field? ye are the Lords  
 building, and we his Builders; think you much of our skill, and  
 indeavours that you may be edified? Therefore whether Paul,  
 or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things  
 present, or things to come, all are yours, all ye are Christs, and  
 Christ is Gods. The greater the trust reposed in us is, the greater  
 is your hope, and our account. The Charge is ours, but the  
 commodity is yours, for whose good we are enfeofed with this  
 power; then for any man to slight or disparage the gift, will  
 argue either a disesteem of the thing it self, or despair to reap  
 any benefit from it; rather give God the glory, that hath given  
 such power unto men, and remember for whose sakes it was  
 given. I shall make up this part with the saying of *Theophylact*;

Behold.

Ἡ μὲν γὰρ  
 ἐστὶ παλαιοῦ  
 γεννῆσις  
 τῆς ἐκκλη-  
 σίας, καὶ  
 ἐστὶ γὰρ γεν-  
 νῆς τῆ ἐκκλη-  
 σίας *Epiphani.*  
*car. 75. pag.*  
 908.

1 Cor. 3. 5.  
 Verse 9.

Verse 12.

Σκοπεῖ μοι ὁ θεὸς ἱερέων τὴν ἀξίαν, ὅτι  
θεὸς ἐστὶ· Θεὸς γὰρ τὸ ἀξιόναυ ἀμαρτίας,  
ὥτως αὐτοὺς τιμνέον ὡς Θεὸν· καὶ γὰρ  
ἀνάξιοι ὄντι, τι ᾧτο; ὁ δὲ θεὸς χάρις  
μάτων ἐστὶ διακονοῖ, καὶ ἡ χάρις ἐνεργεῖ  
δι' αὐτοῦ, ὥστε ἐν αὐτῇ διὰ τῆς οὐκ ἔχοντος  
Βαλαάμ ἐλάλησεν, ἢ γὰρ ἡ ἀναξιοσύνη αὐτοῦ  
τὴν χάριν καλύπτει· ὥστε ἐπεὶ δι' ἱερέων ἡ  
χάρις, τιμνέον αὐτοὺς. *Theoph. in Jo-*  
*an. 20. pag. 137.*

Novatian He-  
resic.

By this that hath been said, it appeareth how much the Church was wronged by *Novatus*, a Bishop in *Africk*, and *Novatian* a Priest of *Rome*; for those two laid their heads together in the conception of that desperate heresie: Spoiling her of this Ministerial power in reconciling Penitents lapsed after baptisme into notorious offences, though their repentance were never so sound, or soundly demonstrated. An opinion begotten upon the severity of those Primitive times, wherein the *Fathers* of the Church, however they might believe that the Church had warrant to receive such sinners, yet they abstained from the use thereof, leaving them to their grief, and Gods mercy; nor were those *Hereticks* proscribed by the Church (as *Pelavius* informeth us) for denying lapsed sinners to be admitted to the communion again; but for cruelly and

*Non quod lapsos ad communionem & Ecclesiasticam pacem admittendos negarent— sed quod nullam ad eos reconciliandos, condonandaque delicta, ius in Ecclesia esse perfidiosè & crudeliter asseverarent, & quod Clavium potestatem Sacerdotibus detraxerent. D. Petav. Animadvers. in Epiph. her. 59. p. 226, 227.*

despitely maintaining, that the Church had no right nor authority to reconcile them, and to pardon their offences; and upon the points wrested from her Priests the power of the keys. The *Novatians* (saith *Ambrose*) tell us, how they ascribe this reverence to God, as to reserve unto him only the power of pardoning offences, *whereas*

*Aiunt Novatiani se Domino deferre reverentiam, cui soli remittendum criminum potestatem reservent; immo nulli maiorem injuriam faciunt, quam qui eius volunt mandata rescindere; nam cum ipse in Evangelio suo dixerit Dominus Jesus, Accipite, &c. Quis est ergo qui magis honorat? utrum qui mandatis obtemperat, an qui resistit? Ecclesia in utroque servat obedientiam, ut peccatum & alliget & relaxet; heresis in altero immitis, in altero inobediens, vult ligare quod non resolvat, non vult solvere quod ligavit. Ambr. l. i. de Pœn. c. 2.*



whereas in truth none do him greater wrong than those that go about to repeal his commandments; seeing the Lord Jesus himself in the Gospel hath said, Receive the Holy Ghost; whose sins soever ye remit, &c. who is it therefore that honoureth him most? whether the man that obeyeth, or he that opposeth his commandments? the Church in both preserves her obedience, as well in binding as in loosing sin. But this heresie in that is cruel, in this disobedient, and will bind that it may not loose, and will not loose what it hath bound. And in this way the Latin Fathers set down this heresie, but the Greek (I know not how truly) charge them further, as affirming them to cut off such sinners not onely from the society of the Church without hope of reconciliation, but from salvation without hope of mercy; that those who denied Christ could not obtain mercy; So Theophylact. And Epiphanius, Novatus breached this heresie, saying, there was no salvation but one repentance, and he that fell after Baptism could never after be able to obtain mercy. But whether they called the mercy of God into question, as they did the reconciliation of the Church, may be doubted; and it may well be, whether Tertullian came home to them in this opinion or no, in whom we read, That Christians should not be mingled with such grievous sinners who were to have neither right nor fellowship with Christians; following the sharp discipline of the times; wherein such lapsed sinners were made over unto God, so, as after a long and tedious repentance, they could not be admitted to be at peace with the Church, without any respect unto them at all, but were for ever, and at their death, also, excluded from the Church, and absolution, saith that learned Civilian, who hath of late enriched the Church with another piece of Tertullian, and pieced the

Μη χεῖναι τὸς ἀνθρώπους σωμείας τυχεῖν. Theodoret.

λέγων μὴ εἶναι σωμείαν, ἀλλὰ μίαν μετάνοιαν· ὥς ὃ τὸ λῆτερον μηκέτι ἐλθεῖν παρὰ πειλοχότα. Epiphani. adv. her. l. 2. tom. 1. her. 59.

Christianos cum his non misceri, eos neque congregare, neque participare cum Christianis. Tertul. contr. Nat. l. i. c. 5.

Tertulliani temporum disciplina iura firmè observavit, ut in Deo committerentur, i. e. ut post longam quamlibet diu, tractam penitentiam, pacem ab Ecclesia impetrare non possint, neq. eorum ratio haberetur, verum in perpetuum Ecclesiâ & absolutione vel in morte privarentur. Gottofredi Notæ ad Tert. contr. Nationes.

same with his learned Notes. Cyprian being censured for the breach of this discipline, and dispensing, and admitting of such who had fallen in persecution, and through frailty had incensed unto Idols, made his apology for his practice herein.

The Church in his dayes, and the dayes following; not onely claimed the power, but acted, and used the same towards Penitent sinners of all sorts, reaching the hand of absolution to such as devoutly craved the same.

*Deus distinctionem non facit, qui misericordiam suam promittit omnibus, & relaxandi licentiam Sacerdotibus suis sine ulla exceptione concessit; sed qui culpam exaggeraverit, exaggeret etiam & poenitentiam, majora enim crimina majoribus ablantur fletibus. Ambr. l. 1. de Pœn. c. 5.*

*For God maketh no distinction (saith Ambrose) who hath promised his mercy unto all, and hath granted to his Priests licence to absolve, without any exception; but he that hath aggravated in offending, let him increase his sorrow; for greater sins are to be washed*

*with larger tears; whereby we are given to understand, that sins in themselves unlike are alike in pardon; and if a Penitent distinguish of them in tears, God will put no difference in pardoning. The incestuous Corinthian smitten with the Churches censure, is upon his sincere repentance restored to his state again; and that speech of the Apostle warranting his restitution, is urged by this Father against these Hereticks; To whom*

*Cur igitur Paulum legunt Novatiani, si eum tam impiè arbitrantur errasse, ut jus sibi vendicaret Domini sui? sed vendicavit acceptum, non usurpavit in debitum. Ambr. l. 1. de Pœn. c. 6.*

*ye forgive any thing, I forgive also; for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it for your sakes, I forgave it in the person of Christ: Why do (saith he) the Novatians then read Saint Paul, if they imagine he erred so impi-*

*ously, as to usurp upon his Lord's right? but he challenged what he received, and encroached not upon what belonged not unto him. The Church then of old hath maintained her own, which she hath ever executed.*

2.  
The properties of the power of the keys,

Hitherto our industry hath sweat in discouraging upon that ministerial power, which Christ in his Gospel hath deposited to the Stewards and Dispensers of the Mysteries of God: Our discourse must continue in laying down the properties belonging

ing to this power; wherein first it occurreth, whether Absolution pronounced from the Priest be absolute, or standeth upon some conditions to make it powerful and efficacious: for answer whereunto, we must know that Priestly absolution is not *ἀπλὸν ἀντίδοτον*, the sole and self working cause of remission, but that more, and more principal Agents, and remarkable conditions belong thereunto; For as the Cardinal observeth upon that *Quare, whether the Sacraments confer grace?* there is a concurrency, 1. of Gods will in the use of an external and visible sign; 2. and of the passion of Christ as the meritorious cause; 3. also the power and intention of the Minister in consecrating the same according to Gods word, as a remote cause; 4. then faith and repentance disposing the Communicant in the right and profitable use thereof; 5. and lastly, the actual participation of the Sacrament. So likewise, that remission of sins may ensue upon Priestly absolution, there is required the will and good pleasure of God to confer this pardon; the suffering of Christ, to deserve the same; and a well-disposed heart in the Penitent, whereby all obstacles are removed that may hinder the operation thereof. It being a received rule, that Physick works not upon an indisposed Patient. The effect indeed is attributed to Priestly absolution, it being Gods ordinance, wherein he hath resolved to declare his mercy. For example. 1. let wood be dried, 2. fire stricken from a flint, 3. applied to the wood, and so burn; it is not driness in the wood, nor striking fire on the flint, nor applying of the fire, but the fire it self that burneth: So it is not in God that wil- leth, nor in Christ that meriteth, nor in the sinner that repen- teth, nor in the Priest that absolveth, but in the divine Ordinance, consisting in the strength, and true use of all of these, that remitteth sins. And as our Lord said unto the blind men in the Gospel, *Believe ye that I am able to do this?* upon whose affir- mative answer, that they believed; he said, *according to your faith be it unto you*: so is the absolution of the Minister efficacious according to the faith and repentance of him that receiveth it. Such conditions the Ancients held to be requisite; name- ly, Hierome, commenting upon those words of Daniel, *It may be God will pardon thy sins*, rebuketh *ἀτασσεύειν*, the temerity

1. Absolution whether absolute or conditional.

Bellar. lib. 2. de Sacram. in genere cap. 1. Sect. igitur ut intelligamus.

Matth. 9. 28, 29.

Dan. 4. 24.

of such as are so absolute and peremptory in their absolutions: *When Blessed Daniel* (saith he) *who knew things to come,*

*doth doubt of the Sentence of God, they do a rash deed that boldly promise pardon unto sinners. And Saint Basil, The power of forgiving is not absolutely conferred, but upon the obedience of the Penitent, and consent of him that hath care of his soul. The same resolution had place in the Schooles. So Aquinas; When the Priest saith, I absolve thee he sheweth the man not onely significantly, but effectually to be absolved — Although that effect may be hindered on his part that receiveth absolution; where a general revelation of faith may suffice, by which sins are forgiven, but the more perfect exposition is, I absolve thee, that is, I bestow*

*upon thee the Sacrament of absolution; clearly differing between the administering of the Sacrament of absolution, and conferring the effect thereof, viz. remission of sins. And Canis, the better to lay open and resolve this doubt, distinguisheth betwixt the giving of absolution, and the effect thereof: his words are these; In respect of the*

*Distinguo ex parte Sacerdotis, & Dei absolventis; absolutus quidem manet, sed ex parte penitentis ponentis obstaculum, absolutio Sacerdotis presentem non habet effectum.*

*solution of the Priest may take no present effect; and informes us further, that Great difference must be made betwixt remission of sins, to which the grace of justification is ever annexed; and the sentence wherein such a remission is juridically pronounced; where the sinner may be absolved before men, but not before God: And concludeth, After this manner the Priest*

*Cum B. Daniel præcius futurorum de sententia Dei dubitet, rem temerariam faciunt qui audacter peccatoribus indulgentiam pollicentur. Hieron. in Dan. 4.*

*Ἡ ἐξουσία τῆς ἀφίεναι ἐκ ἀπολύτως δέ-  
δοται, ἀλλ' ἐν ὑπακοῇ τῇ μετανοούντι,  
καὶ συμφωνίᾳ πρὸς τὸ ἐπιμελούμενον αὐτὴ  
τῆς ψυχῆς. Basil ἀσκηλ. ἐρωτ. 12. pag.  
486. Græc.*

*Cum dicit, ego te absolvo, ostendit hominem absolutum non solum significativè, sed effectivè — licet possit impediri ex parte recipientis. — Sed sufficiat generalis revelatio fidei per quam remittuntur peccata. — esset autem perfectior expositio, Ego te absolvo, i. e. sacramentum absolutionis tibi impendo. Aquin. part. 3. Qu. 84. art. 3. ad Quintum.*

*Remissio peccatorum 1. que habet annexam justificationem, 2. judicialis est, continens sententiam ejus virtute quis solvitur à peccatis, in tali peccatorum judicio remissivo, in quem sensum Sacerdos non semper peccata remittit. — Sacerdos absolvens fictum, verum absolutionis Sacramentum impendit, & quantum in se est veram formam imponit, ejus effectus tunc quidem impeditur per in-*

*Priest absolving an Hypocrite, conferreth the true Sacrament of absolution, and as much as in him lieth, applieth the true form, although the effect be for that present crossed by the indisposition of the receiver: the sense is not then, I absolve thee, that is, I give absolution that shall take present effect, for remission of sins; But I pronounce a judicial absolution which in itself is able to absolve thee, if thou hadst any will to reap the fruits thereof; as if*

*a Judge should give sentence for the Prisoners enlargement and freedom, and he have a minde to remain a Captive still. And although I on this side turn the key, and thou bolt the door on the other, I truly unlocked the door, and open it would be, if thou didst not keep it still barred. By all which it appeareth that this Spanish Prelate was fully of opinion, how a well-disposed mind in the Penitent ought to concur to the absolution of a Priest, that good may come thereof; from whence Maldonat borrowed that form of absolution, I as much as in me lies absolve thee; and Suarez addeth this implicate condition, unless the receiver put some impediment, following therein Hugo de S. Victore, from whom he saith thus; that this form, I absolve thee, doth rather signifie the power, and virtue, than the event of absolution. And the Cardinal himself, however he may exprobrate conditional absolution in us as idle and frivolous, yet upon better consideration his great heart comes down, and determines thus; The Minister by those words (I absolve thee) significeth nothing else, but that he, as much as in him lieth, conferreth the Sacrament of Reconciliation or absolution; which in a man rightly disposed hath virtue to forgive all his sins. This shall serve for the first property.*

*lud significat, nisi se, quod in se est, Sacramentum reconciliationis vel absolutionis impendere, quod vim habet in homine disposito peccata omnia dimittendi. Bellar. l. 2. de Pœn. c. 14.*

*dispositionem Recipientis; nec sensus forme Sacramentalis est, Ego te absolvo, i. e. do absolutionem, que nunc effectum suum habet remissionis peccatorum; sed sensus est, Ego iudicalem absolutionem impendo, que vi sua potens sit te absolvere, si tu velis fructum eius obtinere. Quemadmodum si absolutionis sententiam proferret Iudex, quâ liberareris à carcere, in quo postea tu voluntate tuâ manere vis, & si ego extrinsecus clave janue seram aperirem, & tu volens intus obicem opponeres; Ego verè januam aperui. Canus Relec. de pœn. part. 6. pag. 930. 931.*

*Quantum in me est, ego te absolvo. Mald. tom. 2. de pœn. part. 3. Theol. 5. Nisi suscipiens ponat obicem. Suar. tom. 4. disp. 19. Sect. 2. n. 20.*

*Hanc formam magis significare virtutem suam, quàm eventum. Hugo apud Suarez. Minister illis verbis nihil a-*

In the second place, as touching the *Infallibility* of Priestly absolution, never any Divine was yet so simple to ascribe, or

Whether infallible.  
Priest

John 16. 13.

Priest so impudent to arrogate any such privilege of preservation from error, in the exercise of this Ministerial office: the promise of infallibility was amongst others an *Apostolical privilege*, made unto them by Christ, as they were *witnesses of his name, and truth*; it being a *personal honour*, as the *gift of prophesie*, and *revelation of future events*, serving for the first plantation of the Church; for the same Spirit was promised on their behalf, not only to *guide them into all truth, but so shew them things to come*; nor may any that succeed them in the Ministerial office, pretend to be infallibly guided into all truth, any more than they may unto the gift of prophesie. The Pen-men of the holy Scripture were in that action infallibly true; for they were to prescribe a law, and set a just copy, which if Priests and Ministers follow, they are safe, and their censures just; albeit they cannot challenge that excellency, as that they shall alwayes proceed according to that *Canon*, the word of God. Those *Primitive Planters* were led into all truth *absolutely*, for directions unto *Church-men* their *Successors*; and they working by that square are ever right, though not ever sure to work accordingly. The Apostles then *efficaciter* could not erre, as preserved by the Spirit, and grounded in the truth; and Priests conducted by their writings and instructions have means *sufficient* to preserve them from erring, though no assurance that they are infallible. The *School-Doctors* make the

Potestas excellentie est in universalitate causarum judicandarum, & firmitate iudicii. — Potestas Ministerii est particularis quantum ad causas cognoscendas, & infirma quantum ad sententiam perferendam. — Cui legi Dei dum se conformant, à Deo approbatur, & firma manet; si verò dissentiant ab ea, infirma est, & à Deo revocatur. Gabr. l. 4. dist. 18. Quæst. 1. B.

key of excellency, which *Christ* keeps to himself, to differ from the *ministerial* key, not onely in the *universality of causes*, as fitting all wards, and censuring all *mens actions*; but in *firmness of justice*, as *confirmed* in the right; and they assign the reason, because the will of *Christ* is *inseparably conformed* unto *Divine recti-*

*tude*: now man hath not those clear beams to discern truth from errour, nor his will so certainly rectified, but that errour may impose upon him, or he himself may of his own accord deviate from the right rule. Their conclusion is, the power of absolution exercised by the Priests, extendeth but to *some* persons,



sons and cases, and is infallible in *none*; and then onely in the right when conformable to Gods law. And in truth, if Priests were freed from error, what need the *Schools* so carefully to distinguish betwixt the *erring* and not *erring* key? *Scotus* markes the periods in these proceedings well; 1. Sometimes (saith he) absolution is ratified in heaven on both parts, *viz.* when the sinner is truly Penitent, hath fully confessed, and the Priest rightly absolved. 2. Sometimes on the Priests part onely, when the sinner playes the hypocrite, and makes shew of contrition without inward sorrow; where the Ghostly Father performes his duty, for as man he knoweth not the heart of man; but his absolution is not confirmed above, because the sinner is not capable of that grace he shewed himself to be. 3. Lastly, on the *Penitents* part, if he bar not, but present himself well-disposed, and the Priest proceed erroneously, the *Penitent* reapeth the fruit of absolution from heaven, though not the formall words from below. Thus the *Confessee* may come by the virtue and effect of absolution, although *Qui à Confessionibus*, the Ghostly Father may deny it, and the *Confesseur* may formally and rightly absolve, and no benefit extend to the *Confessee*. Contrition then is required in the sinner, and *fidelity* in the Priest, that absolution may be efficacious. Now as the sinner is not ever contrite and penitent in shriving, no more is the Priest ever faithfull and infallible in pardoning; the sentence of the Priest is then in force when grounded upon Gods word, and treads the footsteps of the Judge eternal; Whatsoever sins ye remit, that is after the form of the Church, and not with an *erring* key, are remitted, saith their Seraphical *Bonaventure*; and *Lyra* limits the confirmation to just proceedings on earth; sins are remitted and retained in heaven, when the judgment of the Church is conformable to Divine judgment. And again, Upon supposition of the true use of the keys, God approves thereof in heaven, otherwise not. And these *Caveats* need not be entred, if the Priest could not mistake

*Quid opus est sic distinguere in Scholis, clave non errante, nisi erret interdum clavis?* Episc. Eliens. Tort. Torti. pag. 67. Scot. l. 4. d. 19. Sect. hæc secunda.  
1. Aliquando ratificabitur arbitrium in cælo ex utraque parte.  
2. Ex parte Sacerdotis tantum.  
3. Ex parte Suscipientis tantum.  
Tunc vera est absolutio Præfidentis, cum æterni arbitrium sequitur Judicis. Greg. in Evangel. hom. 26.

*Quorum remisistis peccata, scilicet in forma Ecclesiæ, & clave non errante, remittuntur.* Bonav. in Joan. 29. p. 20. Tom. I. p. 417. Mogunt. 1609.

*Hoc tamen intelligendum est, quando judicium Ecclesiæ divino judicio conformatur.* Lyra in Joan. 10.

*Supposito hic in terra debito usu clavis, Deus illud approbat in cælis, aliter non.* Idem. in Matth. cap. 16.

mistake herein. And Richard observing the words, that they

*Non dicit, quodcumque voveris ligare, sed quodcumque ligaveris. — Ligat itaque & absolvit sacerdotis sententia iusta, neutrum vero Sacerdotis sententia injusta. Rich. de Clavibus. cap. 11.*

are not, *whatsoever thou hast a will to bind on earth, but whatsoever thou shalt bind; deduceth from thence, that it lies not in the Priests pleasure to bind whom he thinks good, but as he finds just cause: and concludeth;*

*A just sentence from the Priest bindeth and looeth, whereas the unjust sentence of the Priest is a meer nullity. The Schoolmen are seconded by the Canonists. As the Minister or instrument hath*

*Sicut Minister, & instrumentum non habet efficaciam in agendo, nisi secundum quod movetur à Principali Agente; sic Sacerdos cum operatur per istas claves instrumentaliter, si utitur istis clavibus secundum proprium arbitrium, dimittens rectitudinem divine monitionis, peccat. Sum. Angel. verb. Claves. nu. 4.*

*Sacerdoti non licet his clavibus uti pro libito sue voluntatis, quia cum operetur ut instrumentum Dei, divinam motionem sequi debet, aliter peccat. Barthol. Armill. aur. verb. Claves, n. 6.*

*no efficacy in operation, but as moved by the principal Agent: So the Priest who worketh by those keys instrumentally, If he use these keys after his own appetite, and shall omit the just monition of God, sinneth, saith one of that rank: and another much to that purpose; It is not lawful for the Priest to use the keys as he please; for seeing he worketh as an instrument of God, he ought to follow the divine motion, else he is out. Now what need these Cautions and restrictions, that the Priest*

*must be directed by divine monitions, if this instrument were infallibly moved by the virtue of the first agent? and that advise to follow the divine motion, if the keys in his hand were ever and undoubtedly swayed to the right wards? These prescriptions are jealous of some eccentricities in the motion of these inferiour orbs, and of some tamperings in these lower keys. This unanimous consent of School-men and Canonists in this point, whether it proceed from the beams of Divine truth, or for that they would not throw open the Popes prerogative in Common, (whom they hold onely to be infallible) I cannot say. But it may safely be concluded, Absolution to be then onely in force, when matters are carried with right judgment, and no error committed in the use of the keys.*

*The third property, that Absolution from the Priest is declaratory; that is, not absolving so much as pronouncing a Penitent,*

tent from God to be absolved. As the two Apostles having healed the lame man, and the people filled with wonder and amazement, had recourse unto them to do them honour; they professed that it was not their power and holiness that had made that man whole, but that the name of Christ, through faith in his name, had made that man strong, as very shie and fearful of Sacrilege, in concealing the theft of Divine honours which the peoples opinion had stollen for them. So it is not the holiness or power of the Priest and Minister that remitteth sin, but God in the Name and Faith of Christ Jesu. The Priest is an Herald making intimation thereof; his absolution is not ἐξουσιαστικὴ, in his own right pardoning, but ἐξηγητικὴ, demonstrative onely, as a special officer of the King of mercy. And as Gemini an old Astronomer delivered of the constellations in heaven, that they are not the causes of rain, winds, tempests, &c. But because observation found such accidents usually coming to pass upon the Cosmical and Acronical rising and setting of such asterismes, such effects were ascribed unto them; whereas they were not causes thereof, but indications, giving notice that the times and seasons were now come when such effects come to pass. That which the Priest doth is to dispose the Penitent, and by the word, upon probable signs of sorrow to absolve him; which absolution is not a proper act of forgiveness of sin, no more then he that brings the Princes pardon can be said to pardon the Delinquent; nor hath it any direct, necessary, or Physical influence in forgiveness of sin, but he is onely *causa moralis seu concilians*, whereupon God is said to pardon the Penitent when he seeth him humbled. And as a Messenger of the Princes pardon is a mean whereby the prisoner is actually discharged, and *causa sine qua non*, a cause without whose message by him delivered, the offender had been still a captive, and perhaps executed: So oftentimes the Minister is a cause, though not of pardoning, yet of freeing the sinner; and though not of remission, yet of the sense and feeling thereof, by applying the mercy of God, without which the poor sinner might

Acts 2. 10, 12, 16.

Ἄς ἦν ἄστρον ἐπιστολὰ ἐν αὐταὶ πα-  
ραῖτοι ἐισὶ ἦν περὶ τὸ ἀεὶ μελαβολῶν,  
ἀλλὰ σημεῖα ἀκκύνται ἦν τοῖς τῶν φη-  
σάσεων. Gemini Isag. Astron. p. 36.  
apud Petavii' Ουρανολογ.

peradventure have been swallowed up of grief. Although then the Priests absolution be declarative, yet it is not so jejune and leaden as many therefore imagine the same to be; for what else are all Juridical sentences, determinations, and judgments in all kind of laws, but the application of a point in *law* to a matter in *fact*, and a declaration what the thing questioned then is in law, and what justice either *assertive* or *vindictive* belongeth thereunto. Now because the Judge is nothing else but the speaking law, and his judgment an applied declaration thereof; shall his sentence be therefore infirm, because he judgeth according to law? or shall the Priests absolution be the less respected, because it is grounded upon Gods word, denounced in his Lords name, and applied by his special direction? The place wherein they serve is a *Stewards* place, and the *Apostle* telleth them, that *it is required in stewards that they be faithful*; They may not therefore behave themselves like the unjust Steward, presuming to *strike out* their *Masters debt*, and put less in according to law without his direction, and contrary to his liking. *Ambassadors they are for Christ*, and must be careful to follow their Masters instructions, and not to intrench upon soveraign points, as to imagine the power of proclaiming war, or concluding peace lay at their devotion; this indeed were not *προσβουην*, but *μεγαπροσβουην*, to exceed their *Commission*, and upon the matter to subject themselves to the danger of the law, and their proceedings to be vacated, and made of none effect.

1 Cor. 4. 2.

Luke 17. 7, 8.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

*Sacerdotibus tantum tribuit potestatem solvendi & ligandi, i. e. ostendendi homines ligatos vel solutos. — In Levitico se ostendere Sacerdotibus jubentur Leprosi, quos illi non faciunt leprosos, vel mundos, sed discernunt qui mundi vel immundi sunt — hi ergo peccata remittunt vel retinent, dum dimissa à Deo vel retenta indicant & ostendunt. Lomb. l. 4. dist. 18. Sect. non autem.*

The *Master* of the *Sentences* resolveth this power to consist not in binding or in loosing, but in shewing forth onely who are bound and who are loosed; and produceth the authority of Saint *Hierome* to maintain his resolution; that as in the *Levitical law*, the *Lepers* were commanded to present themselves unto the *Priests*, whom they made neither clean nor unclean, but discerned who were so; and concludeth, that *Evangelical Priests* remit and retain sins, when they discover and shew forth what sins by God are retained or remitted. Lombard is followed by Occam; The *Priests* bind or loose,

in shewing men to be bound or loosed. And they both by *Ferus*; Not that any man properly remitteth sin, but that he sheweth and certifieth from God that it is remitted; for the absolution thou receivest from man is nothing else then as if he should say, Behold, my son, I certifie unto thee thy sins to be forgiven; I declare unto thee that thou hast a merciful God; and look whatsoever Christ in baptisme or in the Gospel hath promised unto us, he now by me declareth, and promiseth unto thee. And with this pregnant testimony we conclude this property.

The last property to be inquired, If the act of this absolution be *Ministerial* or *Judicial*; and my answer is, both *ministerial* and *judicial*, per partes to be demonstrated. For the first, It cannot be otherwise, no effect exceeding the virtue of its cause, and no property transcending the nature of its subject. If therefore our calling be *ministerial*, so is every office and act thereof. And let none of that order distaste the name, for *Jesus Christ was a minister of Circumcision*; and the Apostle styles himself a *Minister of the Gospel*, and *Timothy* a consecrated Bishop, a good *Minister of Jesus Christ*. Away then with all contemptuous thoughts, for God hath made his *Ministers* a flame of fire, able *Ministers and of the Spirit, Ministers of the Spirit* and *graces* thereof (amongst whom remission of sin is not the meanest) and not Lords. Therefore before they were habilitated for remission of sins, our Lord is said to breathe upon them, and say, *Receive the Holy Ghost*; for this is not the gift of man (saith *Ambrose*) neither is he given by man, but being called upon by the Priest, is given by God; wherein the gift of God is the Ministry of the Priest; Paul the Apostle held himself

*Sacerdotes ligant & solvunt, quia ostendunt homines ligatos & solutos. Occ. 1. 4. Q. 8, & 9.*

*Non quod homo propriè remittat peccatum, sed quod ostendat & certificet à Deo remissum; neque enim aliud est absolutio quam ab homine accipis, quàm si dicat, En fili, certifico te tibi remissa esse peccata, annuntio tibi te habere propitium Deum; & quacunque Christus in baptismo & Evangelio promissit, tibi nunc per me annunciat & promittit. Ferus in Matth. 9. edit. Mogunt. 1559.*

Whether Ministerial and Judicial.

Rom. 13. 8.

Colof. 1. 23.

1 Tim. 4. 6.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

Heb. 1. 7.

*Non humanum hoc opus, neque ab homine datur, sed invocatus à Sacerdote à Deo traditur; in quo Dei munus Ministerium Sacerdotis est. Paulus Apostolus in tantum se huic officio imparem credidit, ut à Deo nos spiritu optaret impleri. Quis tantus est qui huius tra-*

*ditionem muneris sibi audeat arrogare? itaque Apostolus votum precatione detulit, non ius auctoritate aliqua vendicavit; impetrare optavit, non imperare presumpsit. Ambr. l. 1. de Spiritu S. cap. 7.*

so far unmeet for this office, that he rather prayed we should be filled with the Spirit of God; what man hath so highly conceited of himself, as to arrogate the collation of this gift? The Apostle therefore made his request by prayer, and challenged no right by authority, choosing rather to intreat, and not presuming to command. Ministers then we are, and suppliants on the peoples behalf, that they may receive power from above, and not Lords or commanders of the Spirit of Grace. The same Father also informeth us, saying, Behold how sins are forgiven by the Holy Ghost; but men exhibit their Ministry in the remission, exercising no right or faculty of any power, for sinnes are not forgiven in their name, but in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. They intreat, but the Deity bestoweth; the obsequiousness is from man, the bounty from an higher power; and thus much for the Ministerial part.

*Ecce quia per Spiritum peccata donantur, homines autem in remissione peccatorum ministerium suum exhibent, non ius alicujus potestatis exercent; neque enim in suo, sed in Patris, & Filii, & Spiritus Sancti nomine peccata dimittuntur; isti rogant, Divinitas donat; humanum enim obsequium, sed munificentia superne est potestatis. Ambr. l. 3. de Spirit. S. cap. 19.*

Whether judicial.

*Judicium est definitio ejus quod est iustum.*

For the second, I have cast my self into divers cogitations why this office of absolution should be denied to be a judicial act; Is it because declarative? The like exception lieth against all civil judgments, which are declarations what Law is in particular cases; or is it because the Priest may erre in his declaratory sentence? and that laies hold of a Civil Judge likewise, who hath lawful authority to judge right, yet no assured infallibility that his judgments shall alwayes be right; Is it because Ministerial? Then exclude all Judges from the Bench, that sit there by virtue of an higher power: we determine then, that Ministerial power in the Priest is opposed to Sovereigns and Despotical, but not judicial; because the power in an inferiour Judge is Ministerial in respect of the Authority, and Judicial in regard of the exercise thereof. A Judge he is, though not supreme, and in his own right. So God is the Sovereign and absolute Judge, and in all cases; the Priest subordinate, and substituted by his authority; yet a Judge, though the Lords Officer, and giveth judgment, albeit he declareth his Masters divine will and pleasure. In the case of the Incestuous Corinthian, Paul takes



takes upon him the Authority of a Judge, and denounceth the Spiritual censure; *For I verily as absent in body but present in Spirit*, have judged already, *as though I were present, concerning him that hath done this deed*; where the sentence immediately followeth. Now what judgment is here required and herein to be used, will appear, if we consider the several kinds of judgments, which in *Panormitan* are threefold; 1. of discretion, 2. of examination or inquisition, 3. of authority or definition. Of which the first is held so requisite, that one of the keys hath been called after that name, the *key of discretion*; and where this is wanting, the blind Priest may call light darkness, and darkness light. Discretion serving like the two lights in the firmament, to distinguish virtue and vice asunder; and the more to be required in a Priest, who is not onely to put a difference betwixt light and darkness, but betwixt darkness and darkness, betwixt Leprosie and Leprosie, betwixt sin and sin; and how shall a Priest know sin that is ignorant of the law? and how shall the law be understood without discretion? In that great variety of sins and sinners which may come before the Priest, he had need to have his eyes in his head that shall take the true distance of Criminal cases; for then is the sentence of the Priest approved and confirmed of God and the Court of Heaven, when it proceeds from that discretion, as the merits of the guilty person contradict not the same; whomsoever therefore they loose and bind by the key of discretion, and according as the person may deserve, such are bound and loose in heaven, saith the Perpetual Dictator in the Schools, *Peter Lombard*. Of such necessity is discretion. And when sins are discerned, great judgment is required, as well in the curation of sin as in the punishment of sin, for in some sinners it hapneth that the punishment of sin is the best help and means for the curing thereof; of whom that may be verified, *Perieram nisi perissem*, I had perished utterly if I had not perished. Of this sanative and purgative humour are afflictions, like Northern Winds blowing cold, but sweeping and cleansing the air. Thus the incessuous

*Judiciū quodque sumitur pro discretionē, unde dicitur quod infans & furiosus caret judicio: quodque pro examinatione, seu deliberatione; quodque pro autoritate. Abbas. Clavis discretionis.*

*Tunc sententia Sacerdotis judicio Dei & celestis curie approbatur & confirmatur, cum ita ex discretionē prodit, ut Reorum merita non contradicant. Quoscunque ergo solvunt vel ligant, adhibentes Clavem discretionis Reorum meritis, solvuntur vel ligantur in calis. Magistr. lib. 4. dist. 18.*

person.

1 Cor. 5. 5.

person was delivered unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus: which

Ὁς κηδομένου μᾶλλον ἐστὶ, καὶ ἰατροῦ-  
οντος, ἔχει κόπον ἢ ἀπλῶς, ἕδε κο-  
λάζοντος ἐκκὴ καὶ μάτην. Chrys. in  
1 Cor. 5. 5.

a Spiritual Physician and careful, not from an enemy or destroyer, chastising the flesh for the benefit of the soul. And is there not need of judg-

ment in administering such receipts, where the ingredients may be poysonable and desperate, if not allaiad with much skill and discretion? Again, the Priest had need to be judicious in discerning unfeigned sorrow and contri-

Penitentia est  
quædam dolen-  
tis vindicta,  
semper puniens  
in se quod dolet  
commisisse.

Aug. apud  
Aquín. part. 3.  
Q. 1. 85. art. 1.  
(a) Ezek. 33.  
14.  
(b) 1 Cor. 11.  
3.

tion for sin; for as much as Repentance is an act of vindictive or corrective Justice, whereby a sinner taking vengeance on himself for offending God, in a sort preventeth his justice;

And to repent is (a) to do judgment in the Prophet, or to (b) judge our selves, as the Apostle calls it, to which there belongeth ἐκδίκησις, a revenge or punishment. Now there ought to be

a correspondence betwixt sin and sorrow; and an Analogy betwixt the iniquity of sin and the fruit Worthy of Repentance. And if the Priest find some sinners to take on but little for hainous of-

fences, he is to aggravate the offence, and to proportion the sorrow; not with any intent thereby to satisfy God, but to please him. And in the case the Penitent be swallowed up of

grief, he is to alleviate the burthen; and great judgment is required in making this allotment, what sorrow sorteth for each sin, and to pronounce when the same is defective and excessive.

And lastly, great judgment belongeth in the right application of this power, that it may work and produce good effect. To whom, and to whom not, and which way the key is to be turned, to loose, or to lock the offender; since it is not but with

advice to be applied, nor hands hastily to be laid on any man, 1 Tim. 5. 22. A place referred by the ancient writers to repen-

tance, and the circumstance of the place giveth no less. I said before that the best Physick works not upon indisposed Patients, nor doth one receipt cure all diseases. Judge then the Priest

must of the nature of the disease, of the state of the sinners soul, as well as the efficacy of his Medicine. And it fareth with those that are diseased in mind, as with some such that are visited

with

Pacian. in  
parænesi 16.  
Aug. de Bapt.  
5. 20, 23.

with corporal diseases, as not to question the virtue of the physick, but to suspect their own weakness in the use and operation thereof; It being usual with many (especially at the last gasp) not to doubt of the power of remitting sins, but of their own indisposition to receive it, whether the physick will stay with them or no, and work upon their souls; and a judicious Priest must see to that. These circumstances considered, (and many more that may fall in) tell me, if the handling of the keys and discreet managing thereof be not a judicial act. In such ballances as these causes are to be weighed, and then the power of binding and loosing to be practised; Priests must consider what the fault is, and what repentance hath followed thereupon, that such as Almighty God doth visit with the grace of compunction, those the sentence of the Pastor may absolve. Greg. And hence it comes to pass that the Fathers erect thrones for these Presbyters, making them Judges, and honouring their resolves as solemn judgments. Saint Austin expounds the thrones, and Rev. 20. 4.

those that sat thereon, and the judgment given unto them in the Revelation, not of the last judgment. But the seats of the Rulers, and the Rulers themselves, are understood to be those by whom the Church is now governed. And the judgment given unto them cannot be taken better than of that which is spoken, whose sins soever ye remit, &c. and the Apostle, what have I to do to judge those that are without, and do not you judge of those that are within? And Saint Chrysostome extols the same far above the glittering pomp of earthly Tribunals.

Although the Kings Throne seem unto us majestic for the precious stones dazzling therein and the gold wherewith it is beset. But withall the administration of earthly things alone comes

causa ergo pensande sunt; & cum ligandi atque solvendi potestas exercenda, videndum est quæ culpa, aut quæ sit Penitentia secuta post culpam; ut quos omnipotens Deus per compunctionis gratiam visitat, illos Pastor sententia absolvat. Greg. hom. 26. in Evang.

Non hoc putandum est de ultimo judicio dici, sed sedes Præpositorum, & ipsi præpositi intelligendi sunt, per quos ecclesie nunc gubernatur; Judicium autem datum nullum melius accipiendum, quàm id quod dictum est, Quæcunque ligaveritis, &c. unde Apostolus, Quid enim (inquit) mihi est de his qui foris sunt judicare, nonne de his qui intus sunt vos judicatis? Aug. lib. 20. de Civit. Dei. cap. 9.

Ἐὶ γὰρ σεμνὸς ἦν ὁ θεὸς ὁ δαίε-  
ται ὁ βασιλικὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ περισπῆντος  
αὐτοῦ λίθου, καὶ τῆς περικύρτου αὐτοῦ  
χρυσίου, ἀλλ' ὅμως τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐλα-  
νδρ.

χεν οικονομειν, καὶ πλεον ἔχει τῆς ἐξουσίας ταύτης ἑλὲν, ὃ ὅ τῆς ἱερωσύνης Θεοῦ ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἱδρύεται, καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς διέπειν ἐπιτέτραπται. *Chrys.* εἰς τὸν Ὅλβιον λογ. ε. *Tom. 5. p. 152.*

*Qui claves Regni caelorum habentes, quodammodo ante diem iudicii judicant.* Hierom. ad Heliod.

*Ecce non solum de semetipsis securi sunt, sed etiam alienae obligationis potestatem relaxationis accipiunt, principatumque superni iudicii fortiuntur, ut vice Dei quibusdam peccata relinquunt, quibusdam relaxent.* Greg. sup. 2.

under the jurisdiction thereof; and further authority it hath not; whereas the Priests throne is seated in heaven, and matters thence are turned over to their decision. And Saint Hierome; having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, they judge after a sort before the day of judgment. And Saint Gregory; Behold they are not only secured on their own behalf, but receive the power of loosing the bonds from others, and obtain a principality of judgment from above, that they may in Gods stead retain the sins of some, and release the sins

of others. Either then we must ascribe judgment to the Priests in the Ministry of the keys, or else afford but little in this behalf to these Doctors. Judges sure they are, if these Ancient worthies have any judgment.

3.  
The exercise  
of the keys.

*Dr Field of the Church. Book 5. chap. 22. pag. 104. London, 1610.*

We are now come to the exercise of this power, which is indeed the very life thereof; and this practice is *spiritual*, as the weapons of our warfare are; containing the means, in the discreet use and application whereof God forgiveth sin, and his Minister giveth notice of that forgiveness. Now there are four things in the hand of the Minister (as a great Divine of our Church noteth) the Word, Prayer, Sacraments, and Discipline: by the Word of Doctrine he frameth, winneth and persuadeth the sinner to repentance and conversion, seeking and procuring remission from God. By Prayer he seeketh and obtaineth it for the sinner. By the Sacraments he instrumentally maketh him partaker as well of the grace of remission as of conversion; and by the power of the discipline he doth by way of authority punish evil doers, and remit, or diminish the punishments he inflicteth, according as the Condition of the party may seem to require. Thus that judicious man hath reduced the practick of the keys unto four heads; and we receiving this method from him shall open them more particularly.

1. By the  
Word.

The first is the word of Reconciliation, and consisteth in the preaching and due applying thereof; and the Ministry thereof doth

doth the Apostle specially place as a *powerful ordinance*, where- 2 Cor. 5. 18.  
 by a sinner is cleansed from his iniquity. *Now are ye clean* John 15. 3.  
*through the Word I have spoken unto you*; whereupon Aquinas  
 observeth; *God to have given us*  
*the virtue, and to have inspired into*  
*our hearts, that we should declare unto*  
*the world this reconciliation to have*  
*been made by Christ.* Therefore it is  
 called, 1. the word of *salvation*, Acts 13. 26.  
 2. and the Word of his *grace*, Acts 14. 3. and the  
 word of *promise*, Rom. 9. 9. and the word of *recon-*  
*ciliation*, 2 Cor. 5. 19. and the word of *faith* which  
 we preach, Rom. 10. 8. Inſomuch that when *Ti-*  
*mothy ſhall rightly divide the word of truth*, that is,  
 promiſes to whom promiſes belong, and judg-  
 ment to whom judgment appertaineth, and that *by preaching*  
*of the Word, inſtantly*; and applying the ſame by way of *reproof* 2 Tim. 4. 2.  
 and *exhortation*, or by *private admoniſion*, therein he doth the  
 work of an *Evangelist*, and maketh  
 good proof of his *Ministry*. After this  
 manner did the *Apoſtles looſe the cords*  
*of ſin by the word of God*, (ſaith *Hie-*  
*rome*) by the testimony of the *Scr-*  
*ptures*, and by *exhortations unto virtue*.  
 And Saint *Ambroſe*, ſins are remis-  
 ſed by the word of God, whereof the *Levite* was an *Interpreter*, and  
 a kind of *Executor*. And in this ſenſe the *Apology* of the  
 Church of England acknowledgeth  
 the power of binding and looſing, of o-  
 pening and ſhutting, to have been gi-  
 ven by *Chriſt unto the Miniſters*; and  
 the power of looſing to conſiſt herein,  
 when the *Miniſter by the preaching of*  
*the Goſpel ſhall tender the merits of*  
*Chriſt, and abſolution to dejected ſpi-*  
*rits, and truly penitent, and ſhall de-*  
*nounce unto them an aſſured pardon of their ſins, and hope of eter-*  
*nal ſalvation.* This is that *key of knowledge* mentioned by our Luke 11. 52.

Dediſſe virtutem & inſpiraviſſe in cordibus  
 noſtris, ut annuntiemus mundo hanc reconcili-  
 ationem eſſe factam per Chriſtum. Aquin. in  
 2 Cor. 5.

τῆς σωτηρίας.  
 τῆς χάριτος αὐτῆς.  
 λόγῳ ἐπαγγελίας.  
 τῆς καταλλαγῆς.  
 τῆς πίστεως.  
 2 Tim. 2. 15.

Solvunt eos Apoſtoli ſermone Dei, & testi-  
 moniis Scripturarum, & exhortatione virtu-  
 tum. Hieron. Lib. 6. Comment. in Eſ. 14.  
 Remittuntur peccata per Dei verbum, cujus  
 Levites interpres, & quidam executor eſt.  
 Ambr.

Ministris à Christo datam eſſe ligandi, ſol-  
 vendi, aperiendi, claudendi poteſtatem; ſol-  
 vendi quidem munus in eo ſitum eſſe, ut Mi-  
 niſter deſectis animis, & verè reſpiſcentibus,  
 per Evangelii prædicationem merita Chriſti  
 & abſolutionem offerat, & certam peccatorum  
 condonationem, ac ſpem ſalutis æternæ denun-  
 ciet, &c. Apol. Eccleſ. Anglic.

Matth. 23. 13. *Sav'ionr.* And as the Jewish Scribes were by him justly reprehended, for shutting up the kingdom of heaven against men by their wicked and adulterine expositions of the Law; folding up the propheties, lest the people should read Christ therein,

Τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς γνώσεως κατέχον ἐδε-  
λοκακῶς, καὶ οὐκ ἠνοίγον τὰς τῶ νόμου θυ-  
ρας— τὴν ἀπράλειαν τῶ νόμου. *Theo-*  
*phyl. in Luc. 11.*

A<sup>cts</sup> 14. 26. *ching of the word the door of faith; unlocking (as it were) the kingdom of heaven unto them by giving knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of sins; to give light unto them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace; for to whom doctrine and instruction is com-*

Ἐὰν ὁ τις διδασκαλίαν ἐνεκεχείριστο,  
ἐπὶ εἶχε τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς γνώσεως.  
*Theophyl. suprà.*

*clavis Scientiæ est autoritas docendi, per quam d. bet intellectus latens interiori aperitur; & ipsi à contrario clauderant, perversè interpretando. Lyra in Luc. 11.*

mitted, that man hath the key of knowledge, saith *Theophylact*. The key of knowledge is the authority of teaching, (saith *Lyra*) by which the true understanding lying inwardly hid, ought to be opened; and they on the contrary did shut it up by perverse interpretation. Upon the point then, to shut up the kingdom of heaven is to handle the

word of God deceitfully, or not at all; and *Christ's woe unto you Lawyers, which take away the key of knowledge, is equivalent with Saint Paul's woe unto me if I preach not the Gospel.* And this key is truly turned, when the word is duly applied.

2.  
Prayer.  
Jam. 5. 14, 15. The next means ordained by God for procuring remission of sins, and wherein the Minister doth exercise his function, is *Prayer; Is any sick amongst you? (saith Saint James) let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oyl in the Name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.* And as the chains fell off from *Peters* hands, upon the prayers and intercessions of the Church; so the *Angel of the Covenant* toucheth a Penitents soul, and the bonds of sin are released upon

A<sup>cts</sup> 12. 6.

the



the prayers of the *Presbyters*. Saint *Chrysostome* informes us that *Priests* do not only exercise this

power of forgiveness of sins when they beget us again in Baptisme, but after the administration thereof, that power of remitting sins continueth in them; and for proof of that continuance he alleageth that former passage of Saint *James*, and thereupon inferreth, that

*Priests* forgive sins not by teaching and admonishing onely, but by helping us with their prayers. And Saint *Augustine* maketh this one special way whereby the power of the keys is exercised in remitting sins; and to this end he adviſeth offenders to do pub-

lick Penance, that the Church may pray for them, and impart the benefit of absolution unto them; and that which hath already been alleged from *Leo*, that confession of sin is to be tendered to the Priest, who cometh in as an intreater for the sins of the Penitent. And that of *Ambrose* but lately quoted, The Priests intreat, but the Deity bestoweth; the service is from man, but the bounty from an higher power.

And his reason is sound, because it is the Holy Ghost onely that forgiveth sins by their function, and none can send the Holy Ghost but God; and stand he doth not at the Priests command, but intreaty. In the Schools two not of the meanest rank, *Alexander Halensis*, and *Bonaventure*, are clear of opinion, that the power of the keys extendeth to remission of sins by way of intercession onely, and deprecation, not by imparting any immediate absolution; whereof the later giveth reasons why the form thereof is deprecative, and indicative, for that by the former he looketh upward, and ascendeth unto God by prayer, and as a suppliant obtaineth grace and pardon; by the second he reconcileth to the Church, and

Οὐ γὰρ ὅταν ἡμᾶς ἀναγεννῶσι μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ καὶ ταῦτα συγχωρεῖν ἔχουσιν ἁμαρτήματα, — ἢ πῶς διδάσκειν μόνον καὶ καθίστην, ἀλλὰ καὶ πῶς δι' εὐχῶν βοηθεῖν. *Chrysost.* ἐπεὶ ἱερωσυν. Βιβλ. γ. τομ. 6. pag. 17.

*Agite penitentiam qualis agitur in Ecclesia, ut orer pro vobis Ecclesia. Aug. hom. 49. ex 50.*

*Qui pro delictis Penitentium precator accedit. Leo in fine Epist. 30. ad Episcop. Campan.*

*Isti rogant, Divinitas donat; humanum enim est obsequium, sed munificentia supernae est potestatis. Ambr. de S. Spiritu l. 3. 19.*

*Alex. Hal. in sum. part. 4. Qu. 21. memb. 1.*

*Secundum quod ascendit habet se per modum inferioris, & supplicantis; secundum quod descendit per modum superioris & judicantis: secundum primum modum potest gratiam impetrare, & ad hoc est idoneus; secundum posteriorum modum potest Ecclesiae reconciliare,*

& idem in signum huius, in forma absolutionis premititur oratio per modum deprecationum, & subiungitur absolutio per modum indicativum; & deprecatio gratiam imperat, & absolutio gratiam supponit. Bonav. l. 4. d. 18. art. 2. Qu. 1.

*same to be obtained.* And the ancient method or form of Divine Service observed in the absolving of a person excommunicate,

*Primo* dicat aliquem Psalmum seu orationem Dominicam; *secundo* dicat, Saluum fac servum tuum Deus meus sperantem in te. *Vers.* Domine exaudi orationem meam. *R.* Et Clamor meus ad te veniat. *Vers.* Dominus vobiscum. *R.* Et cum spiritu tuo. *Oratio.* Deus cui proprium est misereri semper, & parcere, suscipe deprecationem nostram, ut hunc famulum tuum quem excommunicationis catena constringit, miseratione tue pietatis absolvas, per Christum Dominum nostrum. *Dein* dicat, Ego te absolvo, &c. *Sum.* Angel. verb. absolutio. 3. 1.

*Then* say, *I absolve thee from the bond of excommunication in the name of the Father, &c.* And accordingly in the new (as well as ancient) rituals of the Latin Church, the form of absolution is expressed in the third person deprecatively, as if it proceeded from God, and not indicatively in the first person, as if it proceeded from the Priest himself, thus; *Almighty God be merci-*

*Misereatur tui omnipotens Deus, & dimittat tibi omnia peccata tua, præterita, præsentia, & futura, quæ commisisti coram eo & Sanctis eius, quæ confessus es, vel per aliquam negligentiam, seu oblivionem, vel malevolentiam abscondisti; liberet te Deus ab omni malo, hic & in futuro: conservet, & confirmet te semper in omni opere bono, & perducatur te Christus Filius Dei vivi ad vitam sæcule sue manentem.* *Consistentium Cerem.* ant. q. Colon. 1530.

*est world without end.* After this form are conceived all the Absolutions

for a sign and demonstration hereof, to the form of absolution there is prayer premised by way of request, then followeth the absolution itself by way of recognition; the prayer begging for grace, and the absolution supposing the

*Lords Prayer; secondly, O Lord save thy servant which putteth his trust in thee. Vers. O Lord hear my prayer. Ans. And let my cry come unto thee. Vers. The Lord be with you. Ans. And with thy spirit. The Prayer. O God, whose property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petition, that this thy servant whom the chain of excommunication bindeth, the pitifulness of thy great mercy may absolve, through Christ our Lord.*

*full unto thee, and forgive thee all thy sins past, present, and to come, which thou hast committed before him and his Saints, which thou hast confessed, or by some negligence or evil wilt hast concealed. God deliver thee from all evil here and hereafter; preserve and confirm thee alwayes in every good work; and Christ the Son of the living God bring thee to the life which remaineth*

*Absolutions* prescribed for use in the *Liturgy* of our Church, as favouring of more modesty, and less superciliousness, and that none of Gods glory might be thought to cleave unto the Ministers fingers; for instance, In the *general absolution* upon the confession of sin at the entrance of Gods worship, *He pardoneth and absolveth all such as truly repent them of their sins, and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel: wherefore we beseech him to grant us true repentance, &c.* And after a general confession of sins premised by the *Communicants*, the *Minister* (or *Bishop* if present) turning himself unto the people saith, *Almighty God our heavenly Father, who for his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all such which with earnest repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and forgive you all your sins, strengthen and confirm you, &c.* And at the visitation of the sick party having confessed any weighty matter wherewith his conscience is troubled, the Priest absolveth him after this sort; *Our Lord Jesus Christ who hath left power to his Church to absolve all sinners which truly repent, and believe on him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by his authority committed unto me, I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, &c.* By all of which it is evident, how much the Church attributeth to prayer, and Divine authority in this ministration.

Forms of Absolution in the Church of England.

A third Ordinance whereby the *Minister* remitteth sins, is in dispensing the *mysteries* of God, the holy *Sacraments*; and these added to the word of God render the pardon under seal, the more to confirm and quiet a distracted Conscience; for of Baptisme it is evident, *Repent* (saith Peter) *and be baptized every one of you in the Name of the Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins. And now why tarriest thou? (saith Ananias unto Paul) arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins.* And the *Nicene Creed*, *I believe one Baptisme for the remission of sins.* Upon which ground Saint *Ambrose* questioned the *Novatians* that baptized, and yet acknowledged no power in the Church to remit sins. *Why baptize you, if sins may not lawfully by man be forgiven? assuredly in Baptism there is a pardon for all offences; What difference is non licet? in Baptismo utiq; remissio peccatorum omnium est. Quid interest utrum per penitentiam an per Lavacrum hoc jus sibi datum sacerdotes vendicent? unum in utroq; Ministerium;* eß. Ambr. l. i. de Poen. c. 7.

3.  
By the Sacraments.  
*Sacramenta non excludimus, quæ verbo tanquam sigillo regis appendi solent.*  
Masar. de Minister. Anglic. l. 5. c. 10. pag. 635.  
AAs 1. 38.  
AAs 22. 16.  
*Cur baptizatis, si per hominem peccata dimitti*  
*there*

Matth. 26. 28.

there whether Priests claim this power as given unto them in the reconciling of Penitents, or in the washing of Baptisme? The Ministry in both being one and the same. So for the holy Eucharist, that lively mirror of our Saviours passion, wherein Christ is crucified *ὡς ἐν τῷ πῶ* before our eyes: wherein the Bread is broken, and delivered in token that his body was broken, and his merits given unto us; wherein the Blood of the new Testament is shed for many for the remission of sins. Now the virtue annexed to these Blessed Sacraments (which are seals of the Promises of the Gospel, as the Censures are of the threats) is from God, whose Sacraments they are, and not from man, who is but the Minister thereof. From his side flowed the blood and water, and because both rise from that spring, they have both this power. Herein is no power for man, where the grace of the Divine bounty prevails; saith Ambrose. It is one thing to baptize by the way of Ministry, and another thing by the way of power (saith the Oracle of Hippo) the power of baptizing the Lord retaineth to himself, the Ministry he hath given to his servants. And that

*Nulla in his hominis potestas est, ubi divini muneris gratia viget. Ambr. suprà.*

*Aliud est baptizare per Ministerium, aliud per potestatem, — sibi tenuit Dominus potestatem baptizandi, servis Ministerium dedit. Aug. tract. 5. in Joan.*

School. man argued not amiss

*Pari potestatis est interiùs baptizare, & à culpa mortali absolvere; sed Deus non debuit potestatem baptizandi interiùs communicare, ne spēs poneretur in homine. — Ergo pari ratione nec potestatem absolvendi ab actuali. Alex. Halens. sum. part. 4. Qu. 21. Memb. 1.*

sin unto any. To conclude this point touching the Sacraments, Cyprian (or the Author of the XII Treatises *De Cardinalibus operibus Christi*) writeth thus;

*Remissio peccatorum, sive per baptismum, sive per alia Sacramenta daretur, propriè Spiritus Sancti est, & ipsi soli huius efficientia privilegium manet. Cyp. tract. de bapt. Chr.*

Forgiveness of sins, whether it be given by Baptisme, or by other Sacraments, is properly of the Holy Ghost; and the privilege of effecting this remaineth unto

him alone. So much for the third mean wherein the power of the keys is exercised, viz. in the due administration of the Sacraments.

The

The fourth and last thing wherein the power of the keys is discerned, consisteth in the *interdictions* and *relaxations* of public *Censures*. Therefore Divines refer the promise of the keys made unto Peter, Matth. 16. to the *Ministry* and *Preaching* of the Gospel, and the mention of the keys to be granted again, Matth. 18. to Ecclesiastical discipline and excommunication. The censure of the Church is, *Let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a Publican*. Where it appeareth to be two-fold; Math. 18.17.

the greater and the lesser, as they are usually termed. The lesser excludeth from the *Sacrament* onely; and the greater shutteth out of the *Church* also, and maketh such interdicted persons like unto the *Heathen*, for whom it was not lawful to enter into the *Temple*, or sit foot on holy ground; whereas the *Publican* was admitted to come within the *Temple*, and to make his prayers there. And this discipline is derived from the Jewish *Synagogue*; our Lord investing his Church with the same power. There are with us, (saith a late learned (a) Rabbīn) three sorts of *Anathemates*, or censures; NIDDUI, CHEREM, & SCHAMMAT A. Niddui, that is, elongation, which separation was partly voluntary, when the unclean betrayed themselves, and desired the expiation; & partly involuntary, when the unclean person was condemned by the *Sanedom* or *Council*, whence the water was called *Niddah*. from expulsion, or separation, because it was used in the expiation of such persons, upon solemn confession of sin had also. But if any person repented not, that is, neglected the expiation, or behaved himself refractorily to the decrees of the *Council*, they did then excommunicate him by *Cherem*, and this is to cut off from *Israel*, or from the congregation; and that man so cut off was to be esteemed no longer an

4. By excommunication & ecclesiastical censures.

*Ille de ligando & solvendo Petro facta promissio, non aliud debet referri quam ad verbi ministerium — locus Matth. 18. ad disciplinam excommunicationis pertinet que ecclesie promissa est. Calvin. Instit. lib. 4. c. 11. Sect. 1, 2.*

(a) Elias Levita.  
I. NIDDUI.

*Niddui fugati, in Novo testamento ἀποστασιν.*

נדה immunditia, menstruum, & Hieron. expiatio, & menstruata, immunda, quod a viro & Templo clongeretur. S. Pagnin. LXXII. χαρισμός, ἀφεσις, ἀγνισμός.

2. CHEREM.

*Quod si quis non respiciisset, anathematizabant eum per Cherem. כרת consecratio, devotio, Anathema.*

*Israelite,*

## 3. SCHAMMATA.

(a) So *Elias Levita* in *Thebyte*. But *Druſinus* derives it from שׁאמא a name, and הנה venit, he comes. The *Syrians* called it *Maran-atha*, the Lord comes. *Druſin* *Pret*.

1. Προσχωρῶν τῇ κοινῳίᾳ. *Concil. Laod. can. 2.*

2. *Communioni v. l. communione reconciliari. Concil. Elib. canon. 72.*

3. *Reddi eis communionem. Ambr. l. 1. de poen. c. 1.*

4. *Ad communicationem admittere. Cypr. Ep. 53.*

5. *Pacem dare, & concedere. Id. ib.*

*Claves Regni caelorum sic dedit Christus ecclesiae, ut non solum diceret, quae solveritis, &c. verum & adjungeret, Quae ligaveritis in terra erunt ligata & in Caelo, quia bona est vindicandi iustitia; illud enim quod ait, sit tibi sicut Ethnicus, & Publicanus, gravius est quam si gladio feriretur, si flammis absumeretur, si feris subigeretur; nam ibi quoque subunxit, Amen dico vobis, Quaecumque ligaveritis, &c. ut intelligeretur, quanto gravius sit punitus, qui veluti relictus est impunitus. Aug. tract. 50. in Joan. c. 12.*

*Israelite*, but an *Heathen*, as our *Lord* speaketh: but if after all this he repented not, *Meschammatabant enim*, they did abominate him with *SCHAMMATA*, that is, judged him guilty of eternal death; and it is called *Schamma*, (a) as if he should say *Death* & there. And peradventure this *Anathema* so aggravated was irrevocable. By this custome thus unfolded, not onely the saying of *Christ*, but many other passages of *Saint Paul*, receive light and interpretation. This is the binding part: The Relaxation or loosing is the amoval of the censure, the restoring to the peace of the Church, and a readmittance to the Lords table.

Which the ancient *Councils* and *Fathers* usually expressed, 1. by bringing them to the *Communion*; 2. reconciling them to or with the *Communion*; 3. restoring the *Communion* to them; 4. or admitting them into the fellowship; 5. granting them peace. Neither is this kind of binding and loosing lightly to be esteemed; for how fearful a thing is it to be exiled from the Society of Gods people, and participation of the holy Mysteries? The keys of the kingdom of heaven (saith *Saint Augustine*) hath *Christ* so given to the Church, that he said not onely, whatsoever ye shall loose, &c. but adjoynd, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; for vindictive justice is good also; And that which he saith, Let him be unto thee as an Heathen, or Publican, is more grievous than if a man should be smitten with the sword, consumed with flames, or cast forth un-

to wild beasts; for there he hath put to Amen, or, Verily, I say unto you whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; that we also might understand how much more grievously he is punished that seemed to us to be left unpunished. And so



I have unfolded those Four wayes wherein the power of the keys is usually practised by the Ministers of the Church.

And thus far with Gods assistance have we waded in declaring the power granted by Christ, and the true imployment of the keys. But as Sovereignty may degenerate into Tyranny, and power into violence and oppression; even so it hath fared in this Ministerial office: Some have been puffed up with Phariſaical honours, as to dilate their fringes, and pass the bounds of Christs Commission. That man of *Rome* who pretends to have *Peters* keys onely, or principally at his devotion, cannot be content to sit in the *Temple of God*, but will there sit as *God*; and intrude upon the Royall prerogative of our *Lord* and Master; planting his throne far above Princes, and not content with that, but to usurp upon Divine honours. *Thomas Aquinas* (or whosoever made that book *De regimine Principum*)

4. Abuse of the keys.

tells us of strange things, and saith we must say so too: *That in the Pope there is fulness of all graces, because he alone granteth full pardon of all sins, that it may be verified of him, which we say of the chief Prince and Lord; for of his fulness we have all received. Nor must this fulness be confined unto spiritual power, but comprehend the temporal also; because that which is corporal and temporal dependeth upon that which is spiritual, and perpetual, as the operation of the body upon the power of the mind.* Nor can any Laws hold him in, for with the key of dispensation he turns them loose at his pleasure. The like power he claimeth over *vows* and *oaths*. Over Princes to absolve them from their Scepters, and subjects from their obedience. *Christ* saith, *I came not to destroy, but to fulfill*, and his pretended *vicar* comes not to fulfill, but to destroy; not to *dispense*, but to *dissipate*. So the keys at *Rome* give him all power over all persons, and in all cases, to do what he please. And such was the carriage and deportment of *Gregory* the VII. who no sooner occupied the chair at *Rome*, but began to glory that both persons of King and

Oportet dicere in summo Pontifice esse plenitudinem omnium gratiarum, quia ipse solus confert plenam indulgentiam omnium peccatorum; ut competat sibi, quod de primo principe Domino dicimus, quia de plenitudine ejus nos omnes accepimus. Aq. de Regim. Princip. l. 3. c. 12. fol. 83. Paris 1509.

Quod si dicatur referri ad solam spiritua-  
lem potestatem, hoc esse non potest, quia corpo-  
rale & temporale ex spirituali, & perpetuo  
dependet, sicut corporis operatio ex virtute ani-  
mæ. Id. ib.

*Utramque personam sibi impositam esse à Christo, se quodcunque ut liberet, ligare, & solvere posse, pœnitare, utramque personam agitare.* Aventin. hist. Boiorum. l. 4. p. 564. Ingolstadtii, 1554.

*Utpote qui errare non possit, & à Christo Domino servatore nostro, Petroque acceperit potestatem, ut solvat, ligetque utcumque libeat.* Id. ib.

*Plurique Antichristum esse prædicabant, titulo Christi n. gorum Antichristi agitat, in Babylonia & Templo Dei sedet, supra omne id quod colitur extollitur, quasi Deus sit, se errare non posse gloriatur. — Homines non peccatis, sed legi Christi atque Sacramentis solvit, — Nimirum sui de Pharisæorum supercilio sumit, ut quosque damnare vel solvere arbitretur: Cum apud Deum non sententia Sacerdotis, sed vita hominis quærat. Aventin. hist. Boior. p. 573.*

*Priest were imposed upon him by Christ; that he acted the part of both, boasting that he had power to bind and loose any thing, and as he pleased — Inso-much that he could not erre, that he had received power from Christ our Lord and Saviour; and from Peter to loose and bind as to him seemed good; Whereupon many preached openly against him, calling him Antichrist, that he pretended for Christ, but promoted the affairs of Antichrist: That at Babylon he sat in the Temple of God; and was extolled above all that which is worshipped; glorying that he cannot erre, as if he were a very God; loosing men not from their sins, but from the*

*Law of Christ, and from their fealty and oaths; taking upon him too much of Pharisaical loftiness; and in imagining he can condemn any man, or set him free; whereas God enquireth after the mans life, not after the Priests sentence. The stories of these times are full of the licentious proceedings of these Prelates, serving their ambitious designs under a pretext of Christ's keys. In the next age they lay still, humbled by the sword-men, by the exploits of the French under Lewis the XII. on that side the Alpes, against Julius II. that war-like Pope, and of the Imperialists under the conduct of Charles Bourbon, sacking Rome, and shutting up Clement VII, a man taken from being a Knight of Malta to the holy Papacy. But of late revived in the insolent attempts of Paul V. interdicting the Venetian Republick, wherein his Flatterers and Proctors bore him up as a God upon earth, a Sun of Justice and light of Religion: How the judgment of God, and sentence of the Pope were one and the same thing; as also the Tribunal and court of the Pope and God; that to doubt of the power of the Pope, is as much as to doubt of the power of God. But the best of it was, that prudent Senate made small reckoning of these Rodemontado's, and through their resolute carriage, all his pretensions and censures came to nought; and those formidable*

Quarrels of  
Paul V. with  
the State of  
Venice, lib. 4.  
pag. 208.

midable names of *Peters keys*, and his *sword*; of the *See Apostolick*, and *infallible judgment*, and his *unlimited jurisdiction*, (by all which *Ch istendome* was formerly enchanted and held in awe) proved but *Panick fears*, and vain titles of *Papal usurpation*.

And what humility can be expected from the Scholars, whose Master is thus swollen, and puffed up; where the meanest Priest in this army that followeth this king of *Pride*, arrogateth such fulness of power in opening and shutting of Heaven Gates, that forgiveness is denied unto them to whom the Priest will not forgive. As if Gods mercy were pinned upon his sleeve; and Priestly absolution were to be preferred, and more to be ascribed thereunto, than unto God. Note (saith *Richardus*) that

God looseth the band of damnation conditionally, but the Minister of the Lord simply, and as I may say wholly, for God absolveth a Penitent from the debt of Damnation under such a condition, that it behooveth him (if he can) to seek the absolution of a Priest, and to make satisfaction in a fitting manner at his pleasure, which if he neglect to do he escapeth not eternal danger. As

if Gods absolution were incomplete, till it be pronounced by the Priest, and he should say, I absolve you as much as in me lieth, but go unto the Priests, and tell them the story of your lives, that you may be thoroughly cleansed, so licencing them (as it were) for Priestly power, from whose *ultima manus*, and lips must be their *Quintus est*, and full discharge; yet not so full as you imagine, for (saith Sir *Richard*) As the absolution of God from eternal death implies this condition, to confess saltem in voto, and to be absolved by a Priest; so the absolution of the Priest from the debt of future purgation, (or of Purgatory) is conditional likewise, viz. if that satisfaction be performed as the Priest in foro pœnitentiali shall injoyne. According to this Doctor God absolveth a penitent from hell, but conditionally, if forsooth he submit himself unto the Sacrament of Penance. And the Priest so too from Purgatory, if the Penitent observe, and

*Negatur remissio eis quibus noluerint Sacerdotes remittere. Bellar. l. 3. de Pœn. c. 12.*

*Notandum est quod vinculum damnationis Dominus solvit conditionaliter, Minister vero simpliciter, & ut sic dicam, integraliter, Penitentem namque à deb. to damnationis Deus absolvit sub tali conditione, ut eum oporteat (prout potest) Sacerdotis absolutionem querere, & ad ejus arbitrium debito modo satisfacere, nam si facere neglexerit, periculum æternum non evadit. Rich. de Clavib. cap. 9.*

*Rich. tract. de Clav. cap. 9.*

fulfill the *satisfaction of Penance*; and with this last condition (sc. doing of Penance) a Papal *indulgence*, or pardon will dispense. Upon the matter then the doctrine of *indulgences* may take away the fear of *Purgatory*; and the doctrine of *Purgatory* the fear of *Hell*. Thus for all their great cry in their power of absolving, it sits down in a point of no moment, not in loosing from sin, or eternal punishment, but from temporary pains onely, and that by way of *commutation*; the fire of *Purgatory* being extinguished in undergoing such Penance, as the Priest himselfeth.

The disorder  
of Romish pe-  
nance and  
pardon.

And herein is justly reprehended that preposterous course observed in the Church of *Rome*; for whereas in the Primitive Church open sinners were put to penance, and after due performance thereof, they were reconciled, and no discharge nor absolution could be expected from the Minister, till all reckonings were ended by the Penitent: It is the fashion in this

*Hodie statim à facta confessione manus penitentis imponitur, & ad communionis ius admittitur, & post absolutionem opera aliqua pietatis quæ ad carnis castigationem, & reliquiarum peccatorum expurgationem faciant, injunguntur.* Cassand. Consult. Art. 11. de Confessione.

*La Romana perversità pone il carro innanzi alli Bovi; & prima concede la remissione, poi impone l'opere di penitenza, quali dourebbono procedere dal Pentimento, & così molto più procedere la remissione.* Marc. Anton. de Dominis Predica in Londra, appresso Giovanni Billio 1617.

Absolution  
not efficacious  
ex operato.

Church, to absolve immediately upon confession, and after absolution to impose the penance, and so come in with their after- reckonings. And what is this but as some of the Ancients have observed, first to loose, and afterwards to bind; *Putting herein* (as that *Eccobolus* of the times, and *Renegado Spalatino* once observed) *the cart before the horse; first conferring pardon, and afterwards impose the work of Penance which ought before to proceed from the Penitent, and much more to precede Remission.* But

not the least wrong committed against the just use of the keys, is in making the absolution of the Priest a *Sacramental act*, conferring grace by the *work wrought*; and that absolution issuing from the Priests lips striketh such a stroke, that by virtue thereof *attrition* doth become *contrition*. As much as if they had said, that a sorrow arising from a servile fear of punishment, and such a fruitless Repentance as *Judas* carried to hell with him, may by virtue of the Priests absolution become a godly sorrow,

sorrow, working repentance to salvation not to be repented of; which must needs proceed from a secret and *mysterious* kind of operation in the absolution it self, when as sorrow conceived upon dread of punishment, and that may be found in wicked *Cain*, as well as in righteous *Abel*, shall be changed into such a sorrow as ariseth upon an hatred of sin; upon an apprehension of Gods displeasure, and his abused mercy that his gifts are slighted, and virtuous exercises too much neglected, which is a *filial* sorrow, and proper to such which are *sealed by the Spirit to the day of adoption*. It cannot be conceived the great harmes that fall out upon this Spiritual cosenage, which flattereth and milketh sinners, *that although they bring not perfect repentance, but a light and small sorrow, conceived upon fear of punishment, and not upon hatred of sin, pieced with absolution, they shall obtain remission of sins, in as ample manner, as if they had brought all the sorrow in the world, and their repentance had been as compleat as might be, accompanied with a very hatred of sin.*

Is not this to dandle sinners in their evil way? And as for that temporal punishment which is supposed to remain for the Priest to inflict, and to afflict the sinner, either a formal penance, or a Papal indulgence shall strike off that likewise. A plausible doctrine for those that would live after the flesh, that sin may be pardoned without hatred of sin, that sorrow in it self imperfect, by virtue of another mans help may be perfected. That there lies such virtue in absolution as to qualifie persons, otherwise indisposed, to reap the fruit thereof; for what sinner would stand so much upon *contrition*, if *attrition* would serve the turne? or earnestly repent, if such a small or crude sorrow might be accepted? I may not well stay any longer upon this abusive part of the keys. And at the length *sois pens soit prou*, as the French-man speaks, be it little or much, I have, (God being my help) absolved this point; the Ministry of the keys being no small part of our Sacred Function, and with what success, I had rather the judicious Reader suppose, then make the relation my self; it being

D'attrito si ficci subito contrito, cioè che se bene non hà il vero, & perfetto pentimento d' suoi peccati, mà un certo picciolo, & leggero, per timor solamente del divin castigo, & non per odio del peccato, con l'assoluzione; Egli goda il beneficio della remissione tanto, quanto se egli havesse il vero, & perfetto pentimento, col vero odio del peccato. Predica. supra. pag. 47.

being a matter not usually, or at least not methodically unfolded by your ordinary writers.

Conclusion.

By all this that hath been said, you may discern how powerful and usefull the keys are, how far forth they conduce to remission of sin by the act and benefit of absolution, promised *Matth.* 16. 19, and accomplished *John* 20. 23. Now little or no use can be made hereof, except the sin, and inward contrition for the same be discovered by some sensible demonstrations. And no sins either for number or greatness are excepted from absolution. Christ teacheth us to forgive *till seventy times seven*, which amounteth to (a) ten jubilees of pardon; and we have example of one, *whose sins were more in number than the hairs of his head*; and of another, *whose were more than the sands of the sea*, that obtained pardon: Yet as Christ saith, *There were many Lepers in Israel in the time of Elizeus the Prophet, and none of them were cleansed save Naaman the Syrian*. So many sins there be, and many sinners there be, and none remitted except they be of the *Quorum remisistis*, by God or the Ministry of his Priests. You may perceive by what hath been discoursed, that many things are required to remission of sins: The Priest may do his *devoir*, yet the absolution may not close, except the Penitent stand rightly disposed. The party then rightly qualified; 1. he must be within the *house* or *family* to whom the *keys* belong, for what have Priests to do *to judge those that are without*? It is required then that he be within his jurisdiction, that is to say, a member of the Church, and a believing Christian. In the Law the *Propitiatory* was annexed to the *Ark*, to shew that they must hold of the *Ark* as Gods people, that would be partakers of the *propitiation* for their sins; Remission of sins being *sors sanctorum, & dos ecclesie*, the inheritance of the Saints, and dowry of the Church. 2. Also he that would claim any benefit of the keys, must be repentant, for in *Christ's* name are preached *Repentance and forgiveness of sins*, and those whom he hath put together, man cannot part asunder. And to Repentance there go two things, 1. a *feeling* of chains, and imprisonment, 2. a grief for them with a desire to be loosed; for *sentiatur onus qui vult levare, & sentiatur vincula qui vult solvi*; let him feel the weight of his burden that would be eased, as

David

(a) 490 times  
accounting (as  
it ought to be)  
a Jubilee to  
consist of 49  
years, not 50.  
*Psal.* 40. 12.  
Orat. Manasseh,  
*Luke* 4. 27.  
Qualities requisite  
in such  
that desire to  
be relieved by  
the benefit of  
the *keys*.

1.

*Exod.* 26. 34.

2.

*Luke* 24. 47.



David did, when he cried out, *my sins are too heavy for me to bear*; and the straitness of his bonds, that would be freed, as Paul did, when he saw *the law in his members bringing him into captivity unto the law of sin*, and thereupon exclaimed *who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* And no otherwise doth Christ proclaime it, that none should come unto him but such *as are weary and heavy laden*. Grow sensible then of thy oppression under sin, how the Irons enter into thy soul, be sorrowful for captivating thy self with those bonds. Resort unto the Priest, shew him thy setters, and crave his assistance to strike them off; and then whom *the Son of man shall set free*, or the Priest in his name, *he shall be free indeed*. And this is the first, and most remarkable consideration, why unto the Priest sins must be confessed.

Psal. 38.

Rom. 7. 23.

Matth. 11.

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CHAP.

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## CHAP. IX.

## The Contents.

*Paternal affection in the Confessary. Good for sheep if the shepherd know their diseases. Medicinal Confession. The grief better healed when clearer opened. Ghostly counsell of great importance to a Penitent. Great care in the choice of a discreet Confessor. Romes rigid Tenet. Absolution denounced by any Priest besides the Ordinary to be invalid. The inconveniencies thereof. The Parochial Priest not to be deserted without just cause, and the same to be approved by the Diocesan.*

II.  
Priest a spiritual Father.

**T** Here are other inducements besides that which hath been spoken, inclining to the practick of Confession, which are now distinctly, but succinctly to follow in their order; as first the *Relation of a Spiritual Father*, for that Paternal affection is (or should be) betwixt the *Pastor* and his *people*; Love being the chaine that tieth the one to his charge, and the other to his due respect. Now what secrets will a dutiful child conceal from an affectionate father? especially secrets of that nature that may be redressed by the fathers help; and may prove obnoxious by the sons concealment. A good Father tenders the infirmities of his child, and upon notice thereof will either cure, or cover them. Thus stood *Saint Paul* affectionate unto the *Corinthians*. *I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.*  
q. d.

q. d. I speak not from a malicious mind to calumniate or disparage you, but unto children, and that beloved; pardon me if I have spoken something harshly, it proceeded from love: I reprove you not but warn you; and who will not with patience endure a fathers warnings? he proceedeth, many instructors you may meet withall but not many fathers, and their care may be much, but not like my affe-

ction; and however they may instruct you, yet it is I that in Christ Jesus have begotten you through my Gospel, in that natural way expressing how great his love was, as Theophylact observed. Now if love thus descend, why should it not ascend? why art thou ashamed to make known thy state to such a father? who will neither write, nor speak to shame thee, and whatsoever he doth therein is by way of monition onely, and no way prejudicial. Take then (as Gregory Nissen advised) the P. iest for a partner of thine affliction, and as thy father, shew unto him without blushing the things that are kept close, he will have care both of thy credit, and of thy cure. See this testimony more amply before.

The next denomination is of a *Shepherd* and *flock*, a name which the Apostle hath given unto Christ the great *Shepherd* of the *sheep*; and Christ to his *Apostle*, in seed my *sheep*. Now it cannot be amiss for the *sheep* if the *shepherd* know their (a) diseases. Christ the Arch *shepherd* differs herein from all others; for whereas some *shepherds* are clothed with the *fleece*, feed upon their *milk*, and kill their *sheep* for *meat*; contrariwise, Christ clotheth them, feedeth them, and was slain for them likewise; and His *shepherds* herein differ from our *shepherds*: for how ever they are clothed with the *fleece*, fed with the *milk*, and reap temporal things, yet have they not power over their lives, to kill them, but to feed and preserve them; yea, if by negligence any of their flock suffer damage, it will be set upon their head and reckoning. It was

Οὐδὲ πορευθεὶς ἡμῶν γινώσκων ταῦτα λέγων, ἀλλὰ ὡς τέκνα— σύγγραφέν μοι ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρῃ ἐπιστολῇ, ἐξ ἀγάπης γὰρ ταῦτα γινώσκων· ἡ ἐκ ἐπιθυμίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο· τίς ἂν ἐκ ἀνδραγασίας παλεῖται τοῦτο; Theoph. in 1 Cor. 5.

Οὐκ εἶπε καὶ ἐκείνους, ἀλλὰ ἐγέννησάν τοι τῆς φύσεως ὁνόματι τὴν ἀγάπην ἐπέδεικνύων. Idem. ibid.

Greg. Nyssen.  
de Poen. in ap-  
pendice ope-  
rum Paris.  
1618. p. 176.

III.  
Priest a Pa-  
stor.  
Heb. 13. 20.  
John 21. 16.  
(a) ὡς τὸ  
παιδίον καὶ  
λυπώμενον  
ἐν δὲ μὲν  
ἀπολαύει δε-  
σποτίας, ἢ τοῦ  
καὶ ἡ ἀμαρτίας.  
Theoph. in  
cap. 5. ad  
Eph. p. 552.

Οὐχ ὁμοίως Σωτὴρ τὰ πρῆσβαλον ὁ μὲν  
 γεγεῖς το ἡ ὁ ποιῶν. *Clem. Alex.*  
*Strom. l. 1. pag. 203.*

wittily observed by that learned and  
 ancient Father, *Clement Alexan-*  
*drinus*, that the Shepherd and the Cook  
 view not the sheep alike. The Butcher

handles him if fat and fit for the slaughter; the shepherd  
 contented with the fleece, and milk, and increase, hath care  
 and watcheth over his flock. Let the sheep then distinguish the  
 shepherds voice from a stranger, and to him let their griefs be  
 unfolded. And let the same mind be in the shepherds, that was

*Qui studet humane infirmitatis emendare*  
*vitia, ipsam infirmitatem suis debet sustinere*  
*& quodammodo pensare humeris, non abjice-*  
*re; Nam pastor ille Evangelicus lassam ovem*  
*vexisse legitur, non abjecisse. Ambr. l. 1. de*  
*Pœn. c. 1.*

in Christ Jesus. He that is studious  
 to heal the vices of humane infirmity,  
 (saith Ambrose) must take upon him  
 the infirmity it self, and bear it as it  
 were, upon his own shoulders, not cast  
 it off, for that Evangelical shepherd is  
 said to have born the wearied sheep, and

not to have cast it off. And can thy infirmities be better known  
 to any than unto him that will take them to himself, and bear  
 the burden upon his own shoulders?

#### IV.

Priest a spiri-  
 tual physician.  
*Tacentibus non*  
*facile potest*  
*medela opportu-*  
*ni & necessarij*  
*sermonis adbi-*  
*beri. Ex lib.*  
*Clement. MS.*

The fourth Correspondence is as unto a Physician, wherein  
 that adage of our Saviour holdeth, *the whole need not the Physi-*  
*cian, but the sick*; And as a sick patient possesseth his Physi-  
 cian with each remarkable passage in his sickness, that the grief  
 being fully apprehended, the remedy may be the better appli-  
 ed: So should it be in the case of spiritual diseases also. The

*Sicut corpori medicamenta preparavit. —*  
*ita etiam anime medicamenta preparavit, in*  
*his sermonibus quos per divinas Scripturas se-*  
*minavit atque dispersit. Archiatros est sal-*  
*vator, qui possit curare omnem languorem &*  
*infirmitatem. Discipuli vero ejus Petrus vel*  
*Paulus, sed & Propheta Medici sunt, &*  
*hi omnes qui post Apostolos in Ecclesia positi*  
*sunt, quibus curandorum vulnerum disciplina*  
*commissa est; Quos voluit Deus in Ecclesia*  
*sua esse Medicos animarum. Origen. hom. 1. in*  
*Psal. 37. circ. Principium.*

*Medicinal Confession. God, saith Origen,*  
*as he hath prepared medicines for the*  
*body, so hath he for the soul likewise,*  
*that we should seek for salves in those*  
*Sermons which he hath sowed and dis-*  
*persed throughout the divine Scri-*  
*ptures. Christ is the chief Physician,*  
*and who is able to heal all diseases and*  
*infirmities. But his Disciples also*  
*Peter and Paul, yea, the Prophets*  
*are Physicians likewise. Yea, all those*  
*who after the Apostles have their place*  
*in*

in the Church, and to whom the discipline of healing wounds is committed, whom God hath placed in the Church to be sent-Physician.

To which purpose Saint Cyprian writeth, how sinners by confession expose [unto the Priests] the burden of their mind, and seek for wholesome medicines even for small and sleighty wounds.

And Saint Hierome of him that is bitten by the old Serpent the Devil, and concealeth the wound, saith, that the

Doctor who hath the tongue to heal, can avail him nothing, for if the sick man be ashamed to confess his disease unto the Physician, no Physick can heal that it knoweth not. And again, The Wound that is not perceived is slowly healed.

And Saint Chrysostome taking notice of the small care we have of our soules health, and of the spiritual Physician, and eke of our backwardness in making known our infirmities; Herein (saith he) much skill must be used, that those who labour under such diseases, may be perswaded willingly to submit themselves unto the Priests, that they might be cured; and not that onely, but that they may know withall how to be thankful unto them for such cures.

And indeed our general unthankfulness herein, argues few to be cured, or to understand the cure, and by whose means it was perfected; for were we sensible of this benefit, we could not be ingrateful unto those that in any sense procured the same. Saint Austin unto Count Julian hath written thus, If we offend by any sin after Baptisme, God for our frailty hath ordained repentance; therefore ought we truly to make our

Peccatores per Confessionem animi sui pondus exponunt, salutarem medicinam parvis sc. & modicis vulneribus exquirunt. Cypr. l. 5. de lapsi.

Magister qui habet linguam ad curand. infacile ei prodesse non poterit; si enim erubescat egrotus vulnus Medico confiteri, quod ignorat Medicina non curat, Hieron. in Ecclesiast. cap. 10.

Vulnus non intellectum tardius sanatur. Idem.

Διὰ τὸ πολλὰς χρεῖα τῆς μηχανῆς ἵνα περῶσιν ἐκόντες ἐαυτοῖς, ὑπέχεν ταῖς παρὰ τοῦ ἱερέως θεραπεύαις δι' ἀκαμνοῦτες, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ μόνον, ἀλλὰ χρεὶν εἰδῶσι τῆς ἰατρείας αὐτοῖς. Chrys. ἐπὶ ἱερουσ. Tom. 6. pag. 10.

Si transgredimur in aliquo peccato post Baptismum, ordinavit nobis penitentiam propter fragilitatem nostram;

ideò debemus confessiones nostras veraciter confiteri, & fructus dignos facere, id est, præterita ne iteremus, secundum iussione Deum timentis Sacerdotis. Qui Sacerdos ut sapiens Medicus primum sinit curare peccata sua, & postea aliena vulnera detergere & sanare, non publicare. Nos sequamur, perquiramus, etiam talibus consilium salutis nostre ineamus. Aug. epist. 111. ad Julian. Com.

confessions, and to bring forth worthy fruit, that is, not to renew our former offences, according to the Priests prescript that feareth God, who as a wise Physician first knoweth how to heal his own sins, and afterwards to scorne the wounds of others, and to heal, but not publish them. Let us follow after such, inquire them out, and of such take counsell for our salvation. And we read in Ecclesiastical story, that when Ambrose that devout Bishop demanded of

*Quibus pharmacis curasti vulnere ista? Respondet Imperator, Tuum opus est & ostendere & miscere Pharmaca, meum vero suscipere. Histor. Tripartit. l. 9. cap. 30.*

*Audivi quosdam referentes de Scriptura etsi non certa, tamen non deserviente fidei, sed potius delectante. Author operis imperfect. in Matth. Homil. 2.*

*Clam in proprio hortu sub quadam arbore pulcherrima adulterium commisit.*

*Serviens Tyrannus per medium cordis tui ut eras subtili arbore cum gladio acutissimo te perforavit.*

*Quo audito, animadvertit ille esse vulnus peccati anime ipsius.*

*Theodosius that penitent Emperor, with what plasters he had cured his wounds? the Prince answered, To you it belongeth to temper the plasters, and prescribe the salves, and for me to receive the same.*

I have read the relation of a dreame, (and dreams may admonish, and illustrate, though not confirm, saith *Gerson*; or as *Chrysostome* of the strange shape and form of that Star which shone before the Eastern Sages, Matth. 2. related by some, that it did not destroy but delight the truth.) Then solace thy self (Christian Reader) with this fancie. "There was a Gentleman that loved a widow besides his wife, and privily in his garden under the covert of a certain tree committed folly with her; shortly after lying in bed with his own wife, it came to pass that she was sorely terrified with a dream, whereof he demanded the cause; she told him how in her dream as he was standing under such a tree, a Savage seemed to run him thorough the heart with a sharpe sword; the very terror whereof (she tending her husbands safety) put her to that out-cry. The dream was no sooner opened, but his Conscience made the exposition; that it was the sword of sin which had wounded his soul: When the morning was come, and both risen from their bed, he advised her, (for that she had not quietly rested that night) to go to Church, and afterwards to repose her self upon a couch which she did. In the mean space my man sent for his Confessor, brought him to the same place in the garden under the same tree, and there abundantly weeping, confessed that sin with the rest that were behind unto him. The Ghostly Father perceiving such plenty of tears and contrition, imposed but an easie penance upon him, viz. the recital of five *Ave Marias*; and afterwards



wards as the Gentleman and his Confessor were come into the house, and as they were sate at dinner, the wife newly awaked, entred the room, and folding her husband within her armes, kissed him. He wondring at her behaviour, and unseasonable imbracements; she excused the same for joy of a new and fresh dream, which had clean extinguished the grief upon the former; for (quoth she) as I now slept, it seemed a certain Physician came unto thee under the same tree, and put five flowers into the wounds, which instantly healed it, and this is the cause of these my unusual salutes. Where, *ὡς ἐν ῥύμφῳ*, is figuratively expressed the wounding of the soul, and curation thereof. But we rely not much upon such pious dreams, little better than pious fables, where we have a more sure word of prophesie. The Priests may rather justly complaine how little they are frequented, and of the scarcity of their Patients; and that must needs arise from the obnoxious conceits of many, preferring shame before danger, and had rather keep the disease by them close, than to have it cured by publishing the same. Yea, if some proceed so far as to discover their disease to the Physician, they either slight his prescriptions, and imagine like *Naaman-Syrus*, their own Rivers as powerful to heal their Lepries, as the Priests *Jordan*; or else dislike them as too corrosive and bitter, and thereupon grow angry and discontented with the Physician. *A people impatient of the cure and healing*, as *Origen* once complained, *are incensed against him that would heal them: whatsoever may be the cause, this way of healing is so little thought on, as if there were no balme in Gilead, and no Physician there, that the health of the daughter of my people may be recovered.*

The fifth and last motive to confess unto the Priest is for advice and comfort, inasmuch as the weightiest affaires stand most in need of counsell, and comfort is not more welcome than to a wounded spirit; this our Church willeth, *Let him open his grief to me, or some other learned and discreet Minister, that he may receive such Ghostly counsel, advice and comfort, as his conscience may be relieved. Hear counsel* (saith the wise man) *and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end: as if he should say, wisdom is augmented in the nursery of counsell,*

*Vidi Medicum quendam ut eas sub tali arbore, ponentem quinque flores in vulnere, unde continuò sanatus es. Spec. Exemplor. dist. 8. Sect. 4.*

*Cura impatiens populus & medela, in perniciem Medentis exarsit. Orig. hom. 1. in Psal. 37.*

*Jer. 8. 22.*

*V.*

The Priest a counsellor and comforter. Book of Common-Prayer, at the Communion. Prov. 19. 20.

sell and instruction. Now in the case of sin there cannot be greater danger, nor greater happiness than to decline the stroke; discreet counsel therefore that tends to that end is much to be prized. Thine own heart is deceitful, and oftentimes conceals the sin, or else diminisheth the guilt, or excuseth the offence. And if thou gain a sight of thy sin, very seldom shall thy contrition be truly poised; either thy sorrow swallowing up thy self, or else thy sin swallowing up thy sorrow: sure it is not the least art so to order *contrition* aright, that it may arise upon just cause, be moderated with fitting discretion, and directed to such ends, that it may prove a godly sorrow, and such which accompanieth salvation. Again, it is not the least of a sinners unhappiness the loss of God and his favour; now to recover the same, what counsel can be thought superfluous? if the favour of a great man be lost, how much means, how many friends, and how great advise should be used to gain him back? And when his favour is obtained, what study and diligence shall be practised in the continuance thereof? when a Penitent hath hit upon a right contrition, hath hopes and comfort of the return of Gods favour, he cannot be ignorant of his own frailty, and therefore needeth directions as much in way of remedy against relapse, as in way of Physick for recovery. Lay all these together, the deceitfulness of thine own heart, and of sin, the danger of contrition lest it prove not sincere; the great peril in the loss of Gods favour, and the difficulty in the recovery thereof; the proclivens of mans nature to plunge into former sins; and tell me if there be not need of more heads than a sinners own in this case of contrition and reconciliation. We read in the bastard-epistles of *Clement* this constitution, which is

*Quod si forte alicuius cor, vel livor, vel infidelitas, vel aliquod malum latenter irrepserit, non erubescat qui animæ suæ curam gerit, confiteri hæc huic qui præst, ut ab ipso per verbum Dei & salubre consilium curetur.*  
Clem. Ep. 1. ad Jacob. fr. Domini.

there fathered upon *Peter*, that if envy, or infidelity, or any other evil did secretly creep into any mans heart, he who had care of his own soul, should not be ashamed to confess those things unto him who had the oversight of him; that by Gods word and wholesome counsel he

might be cured by him. This constitution sure is *Apostolical*, though the Epistles be not; for better advise cannot be prescribed

bed

bed in the case of sin than how to repent thereof, and prevent it. In ancient times the Priests advice was held so necessary, that penitential laws were enacted, and Canons ordained, the better to enable him for direction, wherein the time and manner of Repentance is set down for sins in particular: for the observing of which, the Laicks were to be advised by the Priests; hence the Imperial laws commanded Priests to be well versed and seen in the Penitential Book. Theodulohus Bishop of Orleans stated confession to be therefore necessary, that wholesome counsel being received from Priests,

We may through the saving observations of penance, and mutual prayers, wash out the spots of sins. Such laws with us in England were ordained by Theodore sometimes Arch-Bishop of Canturbury, to inform the Priests to become able Penitentiaries. From whence Beatus Rhenanus concludeth in this sort; Thou seest therefore how necessary it is to use the counsel of the Priest, in as much as the laws instituted for penance might be fulfilled, which were not so well known unto the Laity.

tutis Penitentiae legibus fieret satis, quae laicis non perinde cognitae erant. B. Rhen. praef. ad Tertul. de Pœnit.

Certae Penitentiae leges condere, quibus & tempus & modus singulis peccatis expiandis praestitueretur (Canones Penitentiales vocant) quibus ut fieret satis, opus erat sacerdotum in consilium adhiberi, praesertim à laicis.

Severè jubent in legibus suis, ut Sacerdotes Penitentialem Librum benè calleant, — ut accepto ab eis salutari consilio, saluberrimis penitentiae observationibus, seu mutuis orationibus peccatorum maculas diluamus.

Vides igitur necessarium fuisse Sacerdotis uti consilio, quatenus insti-

For Consolation, wherein not the least part of the Priests counsel consisteth. A Priest must sit his words upon the wheel, that they may be as apples of gold in pictures of silver. Cordial Physick being necessary for some patient. His care must be, not to quench the smoking flax, nor to break the bruised reed: often imitating his Masters words, which were to languishing souls, Confide fili, son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee: that High Priest was sent to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind: and to set at liberty them that are bruised, and to proclaim the year of jubilee, or acceptable year of the Lord. And the Priests of his order have the same errand. God makes no exception of any offence, that pardoneth all sins. Great encouragements then

Prov. 25. 11.

Luke 4. 18, 19.

Drus crimen nullum excepit qui peccata donavit omnia. Ambr.

to come unto the Priest, if you respect the power of absolution no small benefit, the careful love of a *Father*, no mean affection; the wholesome receipts of a *Physician*, no little profit; the sound advise and welcome consolation of a Counseller, no small happiness: what should bar thee from making use of these no *Punctilio's* or mean furtherances of thy souls good? And in pio *Sacerdote* *hæc insunt omnia*: All these graces are lodged in the bosome of a good and indulgent Priest; for we do not (saith Ambrose) make our selves merry upon the hearing of other mens sins, but we bewail them rather, and that not without just cause; for he that rejoyceth at another mans fall, rejoyceth that the Devil hath got the day and victory.

Non ergo gaudeamus super alicujus peccatum, sed magis lugeamus.

nec immerito, quoniam qui lapsu alieno gaudet, Diaboli gaudet victoria. Ambr. lib. 2. de Pœn. cap. 8.

Confessor Ordinary is he that hath cure of souls,

To a Minister thus qualified address thy self; I hear thee say that thou wouldst gladly do so, but canst not meet with one of a thousand adorned with these properties. (My good friend) let not the supposed scarcity of virtuous Priests retard thee from thy duty, lest this pretence seem not a real truth, but a Diabolical fancy and supposition; for the Devil knoweth all wayes to the wood, and when he feels thy heart well disposed to confession, will cast into thy head distastes of the *Confessors*, that out of some dislike unto the persons, the act of their Ministry might be neglected, and thy soul remain a captive under durance of the same bonds still. Do herein as thou wouldst do with thy *Lawyer* and *Physician*; for although the professors in those faculties are not universally, nor perhaps usually of the honestest sort of men, yet a *Lawyer* thou must retain, and a *Physician* thou wilt resort unto, in hope to light on learned and honest men (as either profession yieldeth store of Reverend and learned personages) where then so much chaff is mingled with corn, the use of *Law* and *Physick* must not be left off, onely thou art to fan the persons, and be more circumspect in thy choice. Besides, the power and efficacy of the keys depends not upon the dignity of the Priests Person, for an evil man may be a good Minister; yet a clean Cook is preferred before a sloven in dressing of meats. The *Arabians* have a

Proverb,

Proverb, *Open not thy secret unto Apes; that is, detect not thy secrets unto scorers; for as Apes are mimical imitators of mens actions, so do skorners usually act and represent their words and gesture whom they would lay open to derision; from Priests of this nature set a lock upon thy lips, and chuse with care thy Minister, and make use of his Ministry with Conscience.* It was one of Diogenes

his *Apothegmes*, who upon the view of Philosophers and Physicians,

amongst other men, was wont to say that amongst all living creatures a man should be best advised of these two.

Our choicest treasures we usually commit to our choicest friend. And what Jewel more precious than the soul of man? and what thing more necessary than the salvation thereof? *Make good proof*

(saith Origen) of thy Physician, to whom thou oughtest to expose the cause of thy languishing. Be very circumspect to whom thou art to confess thy sin, that he know how to be weak with those that are weak, to weep with those that weep, and can well skip of condoling and compassion; So at length if he shall prescribe any thing that hath showed himself a learned Physician and a gentle, the counsel he shall give thee embrace and follow it. He therefore that mindeth his souls good, must consider that much resteth in the choice of a skilful Physician, but much more in the pains that must be taken by the Patient himself. Therefore our Church confines not a parishioner, but gives him leave to come unto his own Minister, or some other that is discreet and learned; so that if discretion, or learning, or both reside not in thine own Minister, thou

vetant; aliud ex cum vitare, quod Urbanus monet. Lomb. l. 4. dist. 21. Sect. Caveat autem.

لَا تَكْشِفْ سِرَّكَ لِلدُّعُورِ \* اَعْنِي \*  
لَا تَكْشِفْ سِرَّكَ لِلدُّسْهَرِيِّينَ \*  
كِتَابُ الْأَمْثَالِ \*

A Jos. Scalig. & Tho. Erpenio.  
Edit. XXXVI. pag. 30.

Il avoit de coustume de dire, quand il voyoit des Medecines, & Philosophes entres les hommes; que de tous les animaux l'homme estoit le plus advise. Thevet des illust. hommes liv. 2. chap. 6. v. é de Diogenes.

Tantummodo circumspice diligentiùs cui de-  
beas confiteri peccatum tuum; proba priùs me-  
dicum cui debeas causam languoris exponere,  
qui sciat infirmari cum infirmante, flere cum  
flente, qui condolendi & compatiendi potest  
disciplinam, ut ita demùm si quid illi dixerit,  
qui se priùs & eruditum Medicum ostendit  
& misericordiam, si quid consiliū dederit facias  
& sequaris. Orig. hom. 2. in Pl. 37.

Aliud est ser-  
vare vel odio pro-  
prium Sacerdo-  
tem continere,  
quod Canones

art at liberty for some other : But let thy Conscience bear thee witness that thou forsakeſt him onely for defect of theſe, and for no other ſiniſter reſpect, leſt this liberty be unto thee an occasion of ſinning; and thou forſaking thy ſhepherd, prove but a wandering ſheep. The Church of Rome is too much in the other extreme, not onely cenſuring thoſe that reſort to other Priests, but making their cenſures void alſo. *He that ſhall miſ-*

*Qui ſcienter alienum accedit Sacerdotem, non habentem poteſtatem ſuper eum, non abſolvitur, quia talis ponit abſolutioni obſtacle per prævaricationem præcepti eccleſiaſtici — im- mo bona fide accedenti alienum Sacerdotem negligenter, ignorantia non excuſat, nec talis percipit abſolutionis fructum. Ru. Tapper. Art. 5. p. 85.*

*tingly addreſs himſelf unto a ſtrange Priest, and that hath no power over him, is not abſolved, becauſe ſuch an one puts a bar to abſolution, by tranſgreſſing the precepts of the Church, (ſaith Tapper.) Yea, and more than that; he that ſhall miſtake through ignorance a ſtrange Priest for his own,*

*his negligent ignorance ſhall not excuſe; nor ſhall he partake of abſolution : A rigid aſſertion. Saint Paul obtained mercy at Gods hands becauſe he did it ignorantly; but no mercy may be obtained at the Priests hands, though the Penitent do it ignorantly alſo. And this the School-men ſay is for want of a ſubject matter for the power of abſolution to work on. The Priest at*

*Habet Sacerdos ex ordine poteſtatem activam judicandi, ſed non paſſivam, ſive materiam; ſed oportet aliquem ſubditum ſibi dari, in quẽ habeat juridiſſionem, non ſolum ad hoc, ut ritẽ abſolvat, ſed ut ſimpliciter abſolvat. Quia ſententia à non ſuo iudice lata, eſt nulla. Scotus lib. 4. diſt. 19.*

*his admiſſion into holy Orders, ſaith Scotus, receiveth the active power to judge, but not the paſſive, or matter whereupon he is to ſit; for it is neceſſary that there ſhould be ſome ſubject to his juridiſſion, not onely for the right uſe, but for the uſe it ſelf of abſolution; for ſentence given by a Judge*

*that hath no authority is a meer nullity. And what is this but a net and ſnare for troubled minds; for may it not be ſuſpected, whether this Priest be thine own Confessor, eſpecially when he is landed from beyond the Seas, and here moveth in no certain orb? Our Engliſh Romaniſts may do well to conſider, whether their Priests without a faculty from Rome can hear confeſſions, and abſolve in England; and whether every errant Priest is ſo furniſhed, that comes unto them in that name? there will lie (I fear) againſt many of them *exceptionem fori*. A key indeed*



deed you have Sir Priest, but it will not fit this lock; because it belongs not to your ware-house; I am no sheep of your pasture. Again, if the *material* part of this jurisdiction be not Divine, but Ecclesiastical, (as Divisions of Diocesses and Parishes are) how can the form and power thereof be divine? and if the faculty to absolve conferred upon a Priest be a Divine right, how can any Ecclesiastical Ordinance frustrate the same? God indeed is the God of Order, and there are several flocks depending upon each Pastor; and as *Ordination* doth enable, so *institution* into several charges doth enact our *Ministry*; and 'tis very fit that none ought to put his sickle into another mans harvest: But if a Priest Baptize in my Brothers Parish, and that Baptisme is good; if I celebrate the holy *Eucharist*, and that consecration is Sacred: Why if I absolve upon Confession, should that absolution be invalid? But *σοχασις δ' αλλε*. Now as we grant a liberty to a Parishioner to wave his own Pastor, so great care must be had that this prove not a licentiousness. Thy Parish-priest is thine ordinary Confessor, to whom the care of thy soul is committed, and ordinary means must be used, except in extraordinary cases. The case therefore of thy soul is not usual, or thy Minister is not regular, when addresses must be unto another; and in such events thou a Parishioner art not thine own judge. *Canus* questioneth whether the Pope himself can enable any *Laick* with this freedom, to chuse what Ghostly Father himself pleaseth: and concludeth, that his Holiness would be ridiculous, yea impious, in relinquishing the examination and election of a fit *Confessor* to a popular person. Thou wilt say, who shall judge berwixt the Parishioner and his Priest? surely who, but the superiour *Diocesan*, the *Bishop*, who is set over them both? and he upon the hearing of thy reasons, may receive thy confession himself, or license thee for some one whom he shall judge a fit Confessor for thee. *The election of a*

*Ridiculus esset, immo nefarius summus Pontifex, si examen & probationem idonei Confessoris relinqueret arbitrio cuiuslibet popularis.*  
*Canus Relect. de Poen. part. 6. pag. 952.*

*discreet Priest is not committed unto us.* (saith Aquinas) *to be made at our pleasure, but by the leave of a superior, in case our own Priest is not so fit to grant a wholesome remedy for sin.* For who can make better provision

*Electio discreti sacerdotis non est nobis commissā, ut nostro arbitrio faciendā, sed de licentia superioris, si forte proprius Sacerdos esset minus idoneus ad apponendum peccato salutare remedium.* Aquin. dist. 17. Qu. 3. art. 3.

for thee than a Father of great experience and learning ? and who more ready to pleasure thee than such a grave personage that hath the chief charge of thy soul, and is thine ordinary Pastor and Governour ? But I shall rest no longer upon this subject ; not doubting but if this Pastoral collation between the Minister and his flock were revived, our Reverend Overseers would have an eye upon all such inconvenience. I wind it up with *Canus* ; It may well stand with Christian reason to ordain two Canons, the one that none might confess but to his own parish Priest ; and the other, that none might be made Priest, or admitted to receive either cure of souls or Confessions, without due examination ; the due observance whereof would cut off many quarrels and exceptions.

*Alterum, ne quis  
alieno Sacerdo-  
ti confiteatur ;  
alterum ne quis  
Sacerdos non  
examinatus  
confessiones au-  
diat. Canus  
Rel. part. 6.  
pag. 952.*

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CHAP.

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## CHAP. X.

## The Contents.

*Many Positive precepts without fixed times. The practise for times and seasons left to the Churches arbitration. Times necessary for Confession. When particular persons & consciences are perplexed. Times convenient for all Christians; 1. When visited with desperate diseases. 2. Upon the undertaking of solemn actions and exploits accompanied with danger, and needing special help from God. 3. Upon the receiving of the Blessed Eucharist; before which Confession to the Priest is alwayes convenient, and sometimes necessary, and the neglect thereof in some cases damnable.*

**W**E shall proceed from the duty it self to the *time* for the performance thereof; it is true of all positive precepts that they bind *semper sed non ad semper*, are always in force, but not always to be used. And as that devout Christian, which beside the frequenting of publick prayers, hath his daily addresses in private unto God, opening his heart with the day, and shutting the same upon his knees, may be said to *pray continually*: So that penitent which maketh his confession as often as a distressed Conscience shall suggest, & applies himself to the use of this salve so often as the nature of his wounds shall require, may be said to make continual use of Gods ordinance, and shall feel in his heart the effect and content thereof. The word of God is replenished with  
*holy*

*Præceptis instituitur vita contra peccatum, remediis restituitur post peccatum innocentia; infelix ille qui præceptum contempsit & remedium.. Bern.*

*holy precepts, to avoid sin, and holy remedies to heal us of sin; and that sinners condition is onely formidable, that continues both the precepts and the remedies.* First, obey Gods command in abtaining from sin, and if that be broken, frequent the remedies (whereof Confession is one) to free thee from the guilt of sin. *The Whole need not the Physician,* and would God we had no sins to confess; a felicity indeed much to be wished; but if thou hast sinned, the next felicity unto that is the grace of Contrition and Confession, which I say is ever to be used upon urgent occasion. For in the practick of Christian Religion, there are many precepts, of piety, of fasting, almes-deeds, &c. which are not fixed unto stationary times, but are left to the discretion of the Church, and by her appointment fixed unto times and seasons. Our Church commandeth each parishioner to receive the Eucharist three times a year, whereof Easter to be one; yet confines not a Communicant to these times onely, but that he may enjoy the blessed use thereof at other times also, as his devotion and the opportunity of the Sacrament

*Sic præcepta de sumenda eucharistia & confessione reliquit Christus, nec revera potest determinari ex solo divino jure, quo tempore hæc præcepta nos obligent. Canus Relec. de præen. part. 6. p. 957.*

*serve. Christ hath so left the precepts of communicating and confessing, that it cannot be determined from divine law onely, at what time they bind us in the use thereof. I can resolve that a wounded man should have recourse*

*unto a Chirurgion, and the greater danger is therein, the greater must be his speed and necessity for a salve; but cannot prognosticate at what time he shall be wounded: to repent of sin is necessary, to confess that sin, at least convenient but to sin it self contingent, falling out at no certaine time, though at all times; how then can that be regulated to times, that is in it self, and in the event so irregular? There is a late \* Council that enjoyns Confession once a year, that is to say, the Glossers thereof once a year at the least, but the oftner the better, if occasion be; not that any should defer to the end of the year, but that none should go beyond the year. Yet Divines well advising upon the point, have prescribed three solemn times for the use thereof; and amongst them some are peremptory, that those prefixed times without great offence may not be omitted.*

\* Lateran. sub Innocentio III.

*Imponit necessitatem non differendi confessionem ultra annum, non autem dat licentiam differendi. Bonavent.*

mitted. Others hold them not binding, but advising and counselling all Christians to practice confession at those times appointed. They follow;

The first is when death seemeth by the weakness of the body, and violence of the disease to be at hand; then the advice of the Prophet to *Ezechias* is very seasonable, to set the house of our souls in order, when we must die and not live. The sick person is directed by our Church, to make a special confession, if he feel his conscience troubled with any weighty matter; after which Confession the Priest shall absolve him, in a special form immediately following: Here *Canus* distinguisheth betwixt the peril and the

point of death. They are then said to be in the peril of death, who are in such actions or passions as are usually accompanied with death; as battles in Warre, and tempests at Sea, and grievous diseases; and the point of death is where that fatal stroke certainly ensueth, as at the time of the execution of Malefactors, or when a man laboureth of such a disease which is regularly past recovery. I dare not by any nice distinction remove Confession from the peril to the point of death; but would advise any of my charge to make use thereof, not onely in the point, but the peril of death also, as their hearts shall serve them; for the fruit of devotion is never out of season.

The second time upon the undertaking of any solemn action or exploit joyned with certain danger, and where the divine assistance and blessing seemeth more specially to be required. As when a people or Nation humble themselves by fasting for the removal of some judgment, or the diverting of some imminent danger; that act of humiliation cannot but be more auspicious, if the people call to mind that Gods hand is heavy upon them for sins, and that every man would suspect himself to be the *Achan* for whose transgression *Israel* is put to flight; and then by confessing his sin to his Minister, implore his aid and advice upon the same, I am confident our religious fast would be more pleasing unto God, and his favour more easily compassed. So when we are to bid Battle unto our enemies, considering

I.  
At the time of Death.

Rubrick at the visitation of the sick.

*Non idem esse periculum mortis, & articulum mortis; est periculum mortis in his duntaxat unde mors frequenter solet accidere; & articulos mortis, cum regulariter certa mors est, aut à morbo, vel vulnere, aut ab exteriori vi. Relect. de pœnit. part. 6.*

II.  
Upon achievements and undertakings full of hazard and danger.

considering that it is not our shield nor spear that can save us. I am perswaded that no souldiers can be more valiant and better armed than those that are prepared with confession, and have made their peace with God. We read in the history of our own Nation, how in the time of *Henry the V.* that victorious Prince, when the Pride and strength of *France* was discomfited by an handful of men, and those shrewdly weakened with penury and a tedious march, at the Battle of *Agincourt*; *The English Host the night before was occupied in Prayer and Confession*; and that the King then present caused the Bishops and other spiritual men to give unto them general absolution. And what courage his men shewed, and what a Blessing came from God, that happy victory was a glorious testimony.

*Fabians Chronicle in Henry V. Anno Regni 3. & Christi 1416. Octob. 25.*

## III.

The third is upon the receiving of the holy Sacrament; wherein though we are not so forward as they are that make the omission thereof damnable in a Communicant, though otherwise well disposed; but affirm with *Saint Paul*, that *A man may examine himself and so eat*; And *Saint Chrysostome*,

δοκιμαζέτω ἑαυτὸν ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε προσέτω, καὶ ἕχ ἑτέρον ἐτέρῳ καλεῖται δοκιμάζειν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἑαυτὸν, ἀδημοσίευστον ποιεῖν τὸ δικαστικόν, ἀμάρτυρον ὁ ἔλεγχον. *Chrys. in 1 Cor. 11. Ho 28.*

ἕχ ἑτέρον δικαστὴν ἐφισῶ σοι, ἀλλ' ἑαυτὸν σωπῶ. *Theoph. ibid.*

ἐν τοῖς Ὀλυμπιακοῖς ἀγῶσιν ἐκείνῃς ὁ κέρυξ βοᾷ μέγα καὶ ὑψιλον, εἰ τις τέτις κατήγορεῖ, λέγων μὴ δέλθ' ἐς, μὴ κλέπτης, μὴ τρέπων ποινηρῶν — διὰ τέτο καὶ οἱ ἱερεῖς ὀφρωῖν τότε, τὰς ἀγίας καλῶν καὶ διὰ τῆς φωνῆς ταύτης μωμοσκόπων ἀπαντας, ὥστε μὴ περσελθεῖν τίνα ἀπαράσκευον. *Homil. 17. ad Heb. tom. 4. p. 514.*

*Let every man examine himself, and then let him come; he doth not bid one man examine another, but every one himself, making the judgment private, and the trial without witnesses; And Theophylact, I set not a Judge over thee, but make thee thine own Judge: yet for all that, the same Father maketh the Priest a special Overseer in admitting of Communicants to the Lords Table; for (saith he) as at the Olympick games the Herald there made proclamation that none of the Pretendants that were servile, thierves, or of ill manners, should enter into the list, or contend in that Agon: So the Priest before the Communion calling upon the Saints to enter, by that voice trieth diligently, and looketh into*



into them, lest any should enter unprovided. Learned Downes for *μωμοσκοπῶν* substituteth *μυμήσκων*, but I suppose the first word may stand; for *μωμοσκόποι* amongst the Ethnicks, were the Priests which viewed the Sacrifices, and the *εἰσα*, that were presented at the Altar, and upon that

inspection made their predictions, *οἱ ᾧ ἐρεῖαν μωμοσκόποι*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* styles them; or else shepherds, inquiring into the diseases of their flock in particular; intimating thereby, that the Priests under the Gospel did *μωμοσκοπεῖν*, by a previous examination view the bowels & conscience of those that approached to the Table of the Lord. And our Church instructeth, that if upon this examination where God and the party about to receive are onely present; the Conscience remaineth unquiet, but further comfort and counsel is required; then let him make the Minister of his privy counsel also; his presence may do thee good, it cannot hurt thee. In my opinion then, in case where the conscience wrings, and that there may be great reason to fear the Judge may be prejudicate, and bribed with self-love in his own cause; the approbation of the Priest is alwayes convenient, and sometimes necessary; as the Communicant finds himself in case: and thus much briefly for the time of Confession.

*μωμοσκοπῶν* *pastorum* est, *singularum* *crimium* *vitium* *explorantium*. *Quid* *si* *legamus* *πάντας* *μυμήσκων*; *Note* *Donnai.* *tom* 8. *pag.* 589.

*ἥσαν* *ἡ* *καὶ* *ταῖς* *ᾧ* *δουσίαν* *παρασώσας* *παρὰ* *τὸ* *νόμῳ*, *οἱ* *ᾧ* *ἐρεῖαν* *μωμοσκόποι*. *Strom.* *l.* 4. *pag.* 380. *lin.* 2. *edit.* *Heynsii.*

## C H A P. XI.

## The Contents.

*All convenient secrecy apprimely requisite in the Confessary. Suspicion of discovery a great enemy to Confession. Sins already committed with expressions of grief to be concealed. The Schoolmen bringing sins de futuro to be committed, within the compass of the seal. The damnable doctrine of the Jesuites, that Treasons and Conspiracies yet Plotting against Church or State, and confessed to the Priest, ought to be shut up in privacy. The odious consecrations and inconveniences thereof. Examples of sundry Confessors revealing treasons detected in confession. The preservation of Prince, Church or State to be preferred before the secrecy of the seal. Sins opened in Confession, the concealment whereof complieth not with the Priests fidelity to his Prince and Countrey, to be discovered. Marriage in the Clergy no prejudice to the lawful secrecy of the seal, especially if the penalty of the old Canons against the violaters thereof should be revived.*

**T**Hat which comes next under our consideration is a necessary adjunct and condition, wherein the discretion of the Priest is much desired, that is, that he be *ἐχέμυθος*, one that can lay his hand upon his mouth, seal up in all convenient secrecy the sins that are mustred up in Confession, that they may never once see the light, but lie buried

buried in eternal silence. And truly this condition must be observed, else few will come to confession upon the least hint of publication. No man in his right senses will lie naked in his Tent, and expose himself to the scornes of a scoffing *Canaan*; therefore the Priest may shut his ears, except his lips be closed; for few men would have their doings brought upon the stage: And if a course may be thought on to preserve mens reputation, and yet this part of the Priestly function may be executed, I see no reason but the same may and ought to be preserved. In the reprehension of one Brother that hath trespassed upon another, Christ enjoineth in the first place private monition of his fault between *them two alone*, and so thou hast gained thy *Marth. 18. 15.* brother, and he hath not forfeited his reputation. *Christs will*

*was, sinners to be reprov'd in private,* (saith Theophylact) *lest being openly rebuked, they may grow past shame.*

The reprehension then must be privately carried to preserve the offenders credit. Open reproof for the

ἵνα γὰρ θέλει πρῶτον τὰς ἀμαρτὰς  
νοῦντας ἐλεγχθῆναι, ἵνα μὴ ἐνώπιον πολλῶν ἐλεγχθέντες, ἀναδύσονται γίνονται.  
*Theoph. in Mat. 18.*

most part begetting either despair or impudence. If such care must be had upon the redargution of a sinner, then greater must be the respect of his good name, when he comes in as a *voluntier* upon his own confession, accusing himself upon hope of pardon. And 'tis very fit where God covereth the sinnes in mercy, the Priest should cover them in secrecy: for besides the prescript and light of nature, which willett us to do as we would be done by, and we would be loth any secret of ours should be divulged, whereby our credit might be questioned, and good name (which to all men is a precious odour) should be defamed. Besides, we repute the Betrayers and publishers of secrets, no better than betrayers of trust, and faithless persons; and not so onely, but false in their promise and word, whereby they ingaged themselves to privacy. Now if these reasons have force for keeping secret a matter of importance, which as a secret hath been commended unto us; and we pas-

*celare peccatum de lege natura eleganter probat Scorus quatuor rationibus: 1. ex ratione charitatis: 2. ex ratione fidelitatis: 3. ex ratione veritatis, & veracitatis: 4. ex ratione unitatis, & mutue utilitatis. Biel. 1. 4. dist. 21. Qu. Unica.*

fed our words for the Concealment thereof. All these conditions should swear the Priest to convenient privacy. For the Penitent comes to him of his own accord; acquainteth him with the state of his soul, turns the inside of his conscience outward, and resorteth to him as Gods Deputy for comfort, for absolution; and the Priest herein should resemble God whom he represents: amongst the miracles of whose mercy Saint *Chrysostome* placeth the concealment of sin confessed unto him, and the not upbraiding of a sinner for the same, as well as

ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἐν δαυμασθὲν, ὅτι ἀφίησιν ἡμῖν  
τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐν τὰ ἐδὲ ἐκ-  
καλύπτει ἐδὲ ποιεῖ αὐτὰ φανερά, καὶ δῖλα.  
*Chrys. Adv. c. καὶ Το. 6. pag. 608. lin. 10.*

the forgiveness it self; his words are; *This is not onely wonderful that God forgiveth sins, but that he doth not reveal them, nor lay them open, or make them manifest.* And how reserved Saint *Ambrose* was herein,

appeareth in his Life written by *Paulinus*, who reporteth thus of him, the causes of sins which the penitents confessed, he spake of to none, but unto the Lord to whom he interceded for them. He is unworthy sure of the

*Causas Criminum quas [Pœnitentes] confitebantur, nulli nisi Domino soli: apud quem intercedebat, loquebatur. Paulin. in vit. Ambr.*

*Ministry* of the keys, so to wrong that grieved party, as to be unto him a further occasion of sorrow; he came to find grace in God eyes, and not to lose his reputation in the sight of men, and to make use of the Ministerial key to unloose the bonds of sin, and not to unlock the secrets of his heart in the open view. Let that Priest be branded for a *Doeg*, a *Judas*, and what not, that shall not keep this trust that is committed unto him; that through his folly breaks off that spiritual commerce betwixt himself the *Pastor*, and the sheep of his pasture in the case of sin, absolution, direction, and consolation; for take away the opinion of trust and secrecy, and confession will grow weak and languishing.

The Priest then is conjur'd to secrecy; but whether in all cases and sins as may be brought before him is a great Question. The *Canonists* restrain and confine this secrecy to such sins onely, as are detected in *foro pœnitentiali*, that is, to such sins as have already past, and for which signes of sorrow appear in the Penitent; never extending the same to *future* sins; for to cry

*Peccavi,*

*Peccavi, I have sinned*, may be the voice of a Penitent, but *Peccabo, I will sin*, never : now where there is a resolution to sin, there with safety can lie no absolution. Then if such sins are to be lock'd under secrecy which are confessed *in ordine ad claves*, with relation to absolution and remission ; It will follow that *peccata committenda*, sins purposed to be committed, and *in fieri* to be done, not *in facto* done already, although spoken of in confession, are not so necessary to be conceal'd.

*Panormitan* puts the case, *A certain man* confessed unto the Priest, that he had a mind to kill *Sempronius*, or to do some other mischief, and that he could not hold his hand. The Question is, whether the Priest offendeth in revealing the same or no ? *Innocentius* instanceth, and at length concludeth, that this sin cannot be said to be detected in a repentant way, as well because the sin confessed remaineth to be committed, and is not committed already ; as also because the sinner had no contrition ; wherefore the Priest ought (as warily as he may) to reveal the same, that the sin may be prevented ; for keep this alwayes in mind, that sin committed, and not to be committed is commanded to be concealed in Penance. And *Frier Angelo*, when any one confesseth that he will do a mischief, because the same is not opened in the confistory of Repentance, wherefore the Priest is not tied by virtue of that Sacrament to conceal the same ; — but when it shall verge, and incline to the prejudice and danger, either of the whole Commonalty, or of any man in particular, then if the sinner cannot be taken off, but that he will needs do it ; I am of opinion without prejudice to any, that the Priest not onely may, but is tied to reveal the same to such an one, as will further and not hinder the prevention of further mischief.

*Quidam* fuit confessus Sacerdoti, quod intendebat interficere *Sempronium*, vel aliud maleficium committere, & quod non poterat abstinere, Nunquid Sacerdos peccet revelando ? *Innocentius* instat, & concludit, quod hoc peccatum non dicitur decretum in poenitentia, tum quia peccatum est committendum, & non commissum ; tum quia non habet contritionem. Unde Sacerdos debet (quantum cautiùs potest) revelare, ut peccatum impediatur : & tene hoc semper menti, quod peccatum commissum, & non committendum dicitur detegit in Poenitentia. *Panorm. supra §. de poenit. & remiss. c. Omnis utriusq. n. 24.*

Quando quis confitetur se velle facere aliquid malum ; quia istud non est dictum in poenitentiali foro, ut ideo propter rationem illius Sacramenti non tenetur celare, — sed quando vergeret in periculum communitatis, vel alterius, tum si nullo modo cessaret talis, quin illud faciat, credo sine prejudicio, quod non solum potest, immo tenetur revelare ei qui potest prodesse, & non obesse, ut malo obviatur. *Sum. Angel. v. Confe. ult. nu. 7.*

*miscbief.* This *Canonist* maketh the purposed evil to be of two sorts; 1. either when the damage may light upon the *sinner's own head alone*; 2. or which may redound to the prejudice and hurt of others: the former the Priest may reveal if he please, but the later he is bound to discover, for the crossing, and averting thereof. And the first *School-man*, our Country man

*Potest quis confiteri peccatum, non tamen ut præfens, sed potius ut est in proposito de futuro; ut cum dicit se velle fornicari, & nolle desistere: dico ergo quod non tenetur celare simpliciter, nec si Sacerdos tal. m confessionem revelaret, posset condemnari tanquam violator sigilli confessionis: tamen quia hoc species esset mali, & infamia sequeretur, propter hoc credo, etsi non tenetur de jure talem confessionem occultare, debet tamen celare ratione publicæ honestatis, nisi inconveniens aliquod grave sequeretur, tunc enim credo, quod non esset talis confessio penitus tacenda, nec tamen publicè revelanda propter periculum infamiae, sed cautè, & secretè alicui, qui possit & vellet prodesse innotescenda. Alex. Halens. part. 4. Qu. 28. nu. 2. art. 2. in Resp.*

*Alexander of Hales* thus; *A man may confess a sin not present, but yet to come, and in purpose, as that he will commit fornication and not forbear. I say therefore that the Priest is not bound simply to conceal it: nor may he for any such detection be justly condemned, as a violator of the seal of Confession. Yet because it may seem to have an outward shew of evil, and infamy may follow thereupon, for that cause I am thus minded, that although by law he is not tied to hide such a confession, yet he should do well to conceal it for publick honesties sake, except some grievous inconvenience may like to en-*

*(us upon the same, then I believe that such a Confession ought not altogether to be silenced, nor yet openly to be published for dread of infamy, but cautelously and discreetly to such an one, that can make good use of the discovery; wherein he would seem to be more circumspect, and cautious in the manner of the detection, than those Canonists; whereas the following School-men, Scotus and Biel are so strict upon the matter, that purposed sins,*

*and not committed, come under the seal of secrecy also. And again, it is not lawful for a Priest in any case, come what will come, to reveal confession whether the party confessing be Penitent or not, whether he confess sins already committed, or which he hath a mind and resolution to commit, whether it be a sin in faith or in behaviour.*

*And*

*Non solum peccata commissa, sed etiam committenda in confessione detecta sunt tanquam secreta celanda. Biel, l. 4. d. 21. Qu. 1. Conclus. 3.*

*In nullo casu licet Sacerdoti revelare confessionem, siue confitens peniteat, siue non; siue confiteatur peccata jam opere perpetrata, siue perpetranda; siue sit peccatum in moribus, siue in fide. Biel, sup. resp. ad dub. 2.*

*And not committed, come under the seal of secrecy also. And again, it is not lawful for a Priest in any case, come what will come, to reveal confession whether the party confessing be Penitent or not, whether he confess sins already committed, or which he hath a mind and resolution to commit, whether it be a sin in faith or in behaviour.*

*And*



And the Modern Divines in the Roman Church are no way moderate herein, but so *Stoicall* and stiff for the *seal*, as let the sin be what it will, whether past or to come, it skills not, whether the welfare of *Church* or *State* depend thereon 'tis not material. Heaven and Earth shall pass away, rather than the seal of Confession shall be opened. *A*

*Ghostly Father*, (saith a late *Sorbonist*, and preacher in the Court of *France*) being in the place of God, hath no mouth to reveal what he knoweth in Confession; and for proof hereof he alleageth that of the *Psalmist*, *They*

*have mouths but speak not*. By his words setting him in the place of God, but by his proof making him an *Idol*: the seal of confession (saith he) is so important and religious, that it may not be violated for any thing in the world. And so great is the religion of the seal of confession (saith a *Jesuite*) that in no case, and for no end, yea though it were to protect the State from any great mischief, be it Temporal or Spiritual, it may not be violated. They are the words of

*Eudamon*. or rather *Kacodamon Johannes*; and addeth withal, that this is a received principle amongst men of his rank, with whom the keeping of this seal is preferred before the keeping of the Princes safety and State: Yea, a deep silence is herein re-

quired, that if our Lord *Jesus Christ* should again be conversant on earth, and *Judas* and the *Priest* conspiracy to do again, and the same delivered under seal of Confession, to save our Saviours life, it must not be detected,

as our late *Dread Sovereign* hath observed from the writings of some of that society. No marvel then at those that teach the seal must not be broken to save a Kings life, or City from ruins, that will not break it to save the life of the Son of God. Could

*Car estant en le place de Dieu il n'a point de bouche pour reveler ce qu'il a entendu, Os habent & non loquentur. Et le Sceau de la confession est si important, & religieux, que pour rien du Monde, il ne peut estre violé. P. Bess. Ca esine. Tom. 2. pag. 736.*

*Tantum esse sigilli confessionis religionem, ut in nullo caso, propter nullum finem, etiam protrahenda tota republica ab ingenti malo, temporal vel spirituali violare illud liceat. Eudæmon Joh. Apol. pro Garner. p. 335.*

*Perpetuum silentium præstare licet cum Regis & Reipublicæ interfectione conjunctum, vel certissimo Salvatoris nostri interitu, si nobiscum hic denuo versaretur in terris. Jacob. Rex. Medic. in Orat. Dom. p. 63.*

observed from the writings of some of that society. No marvel then at those that

*Non debet manifestare quæ audiuit in confessione—etiamsi aliquod gravissimum malum non revelando immineret, ut occisio Regis vel civitatis ruina. Armil. Au. 5. Confes. n. 5.*

Inconveniences attending the popish seal of confession.

I.  
II.

*Debet plus timere D. um, & se offerre Martyrio, quam transgredi Dei legem, & Ecclesie, revelando confessionem.*  
Gabr. l. 4. d. 2. l. Q. 1. ad primum.

III.  
IV.

*Sacerdos non audit confessionem ex persona Dei, sed Ministerialiter, loqui autem ex auctoritate alterius, & loqui in persona sua propria, ex commissione alterius.* Scotus.

V.  
\* *E Seminariis missi Sacerdotes*  
— *ad intestinas seditiones sub Confessionis sigillo concitandas.* Cambd. Elizab. ad An. MDLXXX. p. 298.

it ever be imagined that reasonable men should broach such fearful paradoxes, prejudicial to Church & State; God and man, King and subject, making the office of Confession the den, and cave of villanies and treason, and the *keys of heaven* the *keys of hell* to lock up sulphurous treasons, and to keep in that fire and brimstone that it should not break forth, except the *Prince & flower* of the kingdom be born up before it. The holy *Eucliarist* the seal of Grace is with such Fiends the seal to fold up horrid treasons, sealing them up with the receiving of that Sacrament, & silencing their confessions with the pretended seal of another. Yea in some cases the preservation of this seal may prove of much detriment to the *Confessor* himself, as they put the case. Two men conspire to draw their Priest into a wood, and there to murder him; as they are in the way one of the Conspirators repenteth, and revealeth the same to him in confession; what must he do in this case? not go back, for that were to break the seal, but proceed rather and die a Martyr, so sealing this seal with his blood. It causeth a necessary connivency and toleration of sin: As if a man confess unto his Priest that he hath married in other Countreys two wives already, and in his parish intendeth the marriage of a third, the former yet living; the resolution is, rather than to break the seal the Priest is to marry him and to give the Benediction. It is also a stop and bar to the proceedings of justice. If a Confessor be examined upon oath concerning a truth detected unto him in Confession under the seal, he may safely forswear it, that he knoweth nothing thereof; for that the same was made known unto him not in the person of man, but in the person of God; as the *Angel* in the *bush* said to *Moses* in the person of God, *I am the God of thy*

*father, &c.* But *Scotus* liketh not this evasion, because the *Confessor* speaketh not in the person of God, but as a Minister of his put in authority under him; therefore he adviseth him to lie in his answer to equivocations. And lastly it may prove the \* *School* and *nursery* of treason. A Traytor may first feel

his

his Confessor (let it be *F. Garner*) with general notions if he be *fordable*. Another may crave his advice by way of *Consultation*, what course may best be taken to promote the same, and in case it take effect, he may be questioned who shall succeed in the *Crown*, and because these detections, consultations, and questions were proposed under the veil and shadow of Confession, be sure of the *Confessor*, his mouth is stitched up, not a word for a world, because these things relate to confession, & the seal and confession would wax odious should the seal be ripped up. But as a *Reverend Prelate* replied, *Take heed if it grow not more odious, if it cover and nourish in its bosome crimes so odious and pernicious*. And because there may be security given on both sides,

*Cave verò ne contra odiosa magis fiat, si soveat in sinu scelera talia tam & odiosa & perniciofa.*  
Tortura Torti, pag. 292.

the *Confessee* or Penitent is obliged to keep close what the *Confessor* or *Ghostly Father* shall say or do at that time also; so that in this vault Trayterous plots may be conferred upon, and banded to and fro without fear of any discovery; *O my soul*

*Non solum Confessor celare tenetur acta & dicta Confitentis, sed etiam Confitens ad ipsum tenetur quantum ad acta & dicta Sacerdotis.* Gabr. l. 4. d. 21. Q. 1. Concl. 3.

Gen. 49. 6. come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united. Yet for all their close dealings, sometimes mischief will come out, yea hath; when such hellish projects have come before loyal Priests, that have made more Conscience of the safety of their *Anointed Sovereign* than of the secrecy of this seal. "A Gentleman in *Normandy* confessed unto a *Franciscan*, how he had a purpose to have slain "King *Francis* the first, but that he repented thereof; the "Frier absolved him, but kept not his counsel, revealing the "matter to the King, who commended it to the *Parliament* at "Paris, where the cause was heard, and the Traytor adjudged to suffer pains of death; and the Frier not so much as "questioned for the breach of the seal. For the like offence, "and by the *Arrest* of the same Court, was the *Lord of Haulte-ville* executed, who in the time of sickness being like to die, "confessed the like purpose of murdering his Prince; he recovering of his sickness, and being accused of his Confessor, "had judgment to die for Treason. And not many years since "one *Peter Barriers* was tormented upon the wheel by the

Sundry Examples of conspiracies confessed and detected.  
Bodin, de Repub. lib. 2. c. 5.

Hist. de Paris, pag. 305.

Hist. de Paris, pag. 144.

Lord Bucars  
Hist. of King  
Henry 7. pag.  
125.

Hall Chron.  
An. RR. Hen-  
rici 8. 13.  
He was execu-  
ted May 17.  
1522.

Ex iudicio sa-  
crifici, qui hoc  
quondam ex  
Regicidis inter  
confutendum se  
auduisse affir-  
marit. Cambd.  
Eliz. ad An.  
Dom. 1571.  
pag. 192.

Action a-  
gainst F. Gar-  
net. pag. 99.

“ judgment of the Lord *Steward* of the Kings household, for  
“ that at *Lyons* he had confessed unto a certain *Jacobine*, a re-  
“ solution to destroy his Sovereign; the Confessor being not  
“ able to take him off from his hellish design, revealed the same  
“ to the *Secretary* of State, whereupon the Traytor was appre-  
“ hended and deservedly executed. And at home a *Noble Hi-*  
*storian* mentioneth, that when *Perkin Warbeck* had personated  
*Richard Duke of York* (smothered in his infancy) so at life as  
he could hardly be discerned from the Duke himself, and found  
many and great adherents. *Henry* the VII that prudent Prince,  
being lost in a wood of suspicions, and not knowing whom to trust,  
had intelligence with the Confessors and Chaplaines of great men.  
Imagining that through those perping holes he might discern  
mens thoughts, and take the depth of their hearts, and found  
their affections; and as Confessors are too oft the bars to keep  
in, so they may sometimes be the keys to unlock treacherous at-  
tempts. And such was the fate and fall of a great *Peer* of this  
Land, *Edward Bowden Duke of Buckingham*, where a *Monk*  
instilled and induced the Duke to the treason, and *John Dela-*  
*court* Priest, his Confessor was one that accused him, who by  
his *Peers* was found guilty, and had judgment by the Duke of  
*Norfolk*, then Lord high *Steward*, and for that offence lost his  
head. And lastly, *James Hamilton Arch-Bishop of Saint An-*  
*drews* in *Scotland* was executed as accessary to the Parricide of  
the *King of Scots*, Grandfather to our late Sovereign, upon the  
accusatio of a Priest, who gave in evidence that some of the tray-  
torous Parricides had in confession detected so much unto him.  
For mine own part I confidently aver, there is no honest Priest  
in offences of this nature that concern the safety of the sacred  
*Person* of his Sovereign, or the State, that will give sleep to his eyes,  
or slumber to his eye-lids, till he shall have unfolded the same to  
the *Magistrate* next at hand. Yea *Garnet* himself arraigned for  
his treachery in this point, openly said, *I willingly acknowledge*  
*such laws as forbid treasons to be concealed, to be just and whole-*  
*some; for it is not fit that the safety of the Prince depend upon ano-*  
*ther mans conscience: and accordingly doth a Frier of their fide*  
conclude in certain Articles maintained in the *University of*  
*Paris;*

*Paria; A Priest may discover that which he had notice of under the seal of secrecy, if that which he knoweth tend to the detriment of the Commonwealth, or to the destruction of the whole Commonalty.*

*Potest quis id quod novit sub sigillo Secreti manifestare, si id quod novit vergit in detrimentum Reipublice, vel in perniciem totius communitatis. Jacob. Lup. tract. de Confess. Propos. 36.*

Sins then or treacherous attempts against the dignity of the Crown, or State, or the fundamental laws thereof, as dangerous or destructive of the publick good, must be held in under no seal, and folded up in no secrecy, but brought into the light, that the danger may be averted, and the offender punished, and all others warned to be faithful and obedient. For in just fears even divine positive laws lose their hold and obligation, Religion commanding such things which make *ad lucrum & custodiam charitatis*, saith Saint Bernard, for the gain and preservation of charity. But whatsoever and whensoever they prove contrary unto charity and destructive thereof, *It is very just that such ordinances, as were made for the good of charity, if they appear prejudicial to the same, should be omitted, or intermitted, or for charities sake altered into better*; as the Father prudently ad-

*Si contraria fortè charitati visa fuerint, nonne justissimum esse liquet, ut quæ pro charitate inventa fuerunt, pro charitate verò ubi expedire videtur, vel omitantur, vel intermittantur, vel in aliud fortè commodius demutantur? Bern. tract. de dispens. & præcepto.*

viseth. And what greater breach can there be of charity, than to rake up such offences under silence, by the concealment whereof the King and State may be so highly impaired, and the just laws thereof not executed upon the Malefactors? Thou wilt say what must be done in these cases where the sinners conscience is perplexed, and cannot be quieted without confession and absolution from a Priest, and confess he dare not for fear of detection? Indeed many are the reasons that fight for the seal, but more that fight against it. And in cases of this nature I say, what have I to do to judge these things that are without the law of charity and secrecy? and further say, how I could heartily wish them known, that the offenders may be made manifest and punished, and the peace of the Realm secured. Although the *Casuits* are generally concurrent in this, That such sins may be omitted in Confession, as would either

scandalize the Confessor, indanger the Penitent, or defame a third person.

*penitentia-  
tis Confessio-  
nis, quod ultra  
peccatum mor-  
tale, libet de-  
trahi in Mona-  
sterium, & de-  
positi. Sum. An-  
gel. verb. Con-  
fess. ult. nu. 19.*  
Marriage in  
the Clergie no  
obstacle to the  
seal.

Setting aside then sins of this nature, I could very well approve of a fitting privacy in the carriage and exercise of this Ministerial function, and wish those *Canons* revived that punished the betrayers and publishers thereof with deprivation and loss of all spiritual preferments, and with incapability for attaining any suture advancements. It will be here said, How can any penitent secure himself of such secrecy at the hands of the *Married Clergie*? As if the relation of a husband were not distinct from the office of a *Minister*; By the like reason exclude all married men from being *Privy Counsellors* to his Majesty, or from being acquainted with any designs which require privacy. Yea a Priest by the same reason must be without a friend, as well as without a wife, for more secrets are unfolded upon terms of friendship than upon ties of Marriage. That condition of life, and Christian liberty granted to our Clergie, is not yet beheld without envy and contradiction. *Although the Apostle*

*καὶ μὴν ἐν τῇ μιᾷ γυναὶκὶς ἀνδρὶ  
πάντοτε ἀπέχεται [ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ] καὶ  
προσβύτερος ἢ, καὶ διάκονος, καὶ λαϊ-  
κὸς ἀνεπιλήπιος γάμῳ χρώμενος. Cl.  
Alex. Strom. l. 3. p. 338.*

*(saith Clemens Alexandrinus) admit  
of marriage to be used by Priests and  
Deacons, as by Lay-men without of-  
fence; where that Father is at the  
pains in learnedly answering the ob-  
jections of the old Heretick and new  
Papist against the same; yet what*

vociferations are taken up and renewed in our dayes against Married Church-men, as exhausting Ecclesiastical means upon their posterity, and advancing their children to the fattest Benefices. I know not how far affection may transport some of them that way; but the same exception lies against the single Clergie also, unless you suppose them all to be like *Melchisedeck*, without Father, without Mother, without Kindred, and Ally, as well as without Wife and Pedegree. For amongst the unmarried Clergie, do not mine eyes behold Nephews sitting on the right hand, and Nieces on the left, in the most fertile preferments of their *Prelacy*? Such single Prelates as earnestly endeavouring the raising of the Collateral, as the other do of the direct line. But ἐπέχω, and turning my self towards the followers

*Cum Factor Re-  
rum privavit  
semine Clerum,  
Ad Sathanæ  
votum successit  
verba Nepotum.*



followers of *Rome*, I say there is not less danger of publication by means of a *Priests Lemman*, than a *Priests Wife*; and am perswaded that as *Greenwell* did open the *Powder-Treason* unto *Garnet* under a formal confession, so that *Father* could not conceal this secrecy from his dear daughter *Mrs Anne Vaux*, opening that secret to his own destruction, (as a great \* Statesman of the times charged upon him) which he concealed for the safety of others. The Letters betwixt him and his Mistress import no less, than as if *Mrs Anne* had taken in writing the Confession of a *Jesuit* under seal. For let any of his Proctors answer me; Two onely knew of that secret, *Titius* and his Mate; the Penitent and the Ghostly Father. The sinner, viz. *Greenwell* was gone and fled, and would not of all likelihood betray himself, now who else could reveal what was confessed but *Titius* himself, that is, *Father Garnet* or *Mrs Vaux*, who stept in and was intrusted with the same. But of these matters enough. I conclude this point, that if the peril of deposition were in force, the married Priest would be well advised, how his *Dalilah* should come so near as to endanger the polling off the hair of his livelihood, and sustenance.

Earl of Salisbury.

## CHAP. XII.

## The Contents.

*An Historical relation of the Canons and Constitutions of the Church of England concerning Confession, and the Practice thereof by some of the chief Members in the same.*

\* Anno 668.  
Theodorus.  
Seculari &  
Ecclesiasticâ  
Philosophiâ  
prædius, Græcè  
& Latine  
sufficienter instru-  
ctus, probus mo-  
ribus. Chron.  
Florentii Wi-  
gorn.

1. At Heort-  
ford, &c.
2. Putta at Ro-  
chester.
3. At Hathele,  
Echelward  
hist. lib. 2. cap.  
28.
4. Winifride  
from Lichfield.

*Primus omnium antistitum Cantuarie vigo-  
rem Pontificalem exercuit in tota Britannia.  
Malmesb. de gest. Pontific. lib. 1. pag. 112.  
Edit. London.*

**T**HUS as God hath enabled me is my purpose brought well-nigh unto a Period, and I begin to see the end of my journey. Now so far as Confession belongeth to the *practick* of Christianity, & is not so much a matter of *faith* as *fact*, I held it not amiss to make a brief collection of such *Provincial Constitutions* and *National Laws*, as have been heretofore established in this *Church of England*; together with such observations and passages of story, which mention the same to be practised by the *Heroes* and principal pillars of this kingdom; which I shall faithfully relate, and leave the censure to indifferent Readers.

\* The first man that took any order herein is said to be *Theodorus*, by birth a *Greek*, born at *Tarsus* in *Cilicia*, and by place *Arch-Bishop* of *Canturbury*, advanced to that See *An. Dom. 668*. and sate in the same *XXII* years. A man seen in the *Greek* and *Latin* tongues, well versed in *Secular* and *Ecclesiastical* *Philosophy*, and of good courage, saith the *Monk* of *Worcester*, exercising all the functions of an *Arch-Prelate*; 1. in erecting of *Diocesses*; 2. in consecration of *Bishops*; 3. in convocation of *Synods*; 4. and deposition of *Prelates*. The first in the rank of *Arch-Bishops* that bore the swing throughout all *Britany*, saith *Malmesburienfis*; which

which reaching to the North, was of that force as to strike *Cedda* and *Wilfride* from their chairs; whom forasmuch as we can conjecture, he unjustly put down (saith he likewise) and was so highly favoured at Rome, as *Wilfrides* appeal thither could not be heard. The Pope resolving to repeal none of Arch Bishop *Theodores* acts, how it soever they were made. So that it seems in those dayes kissing went by favour. This stirring *Prelate*, saith *Beda*, Described in a marvellous discreet manner censures for offenders, that is to say, how many years they ought to repent for several sins; which is not that Capitular which *Ivo* and *Burchardus* have set down in their decrees, but another Penitential much different therefrom.

Sir *Henry Spelman* that great ingrosser of Antiquity, and faithful Champion of the Churches Patrimony, hath published the heads of that desired Penitential, the Original whereof is extant among the precious *Archiva* of the Library of *Bennet College* in Cambridge. The Copy (as unwilling to be prolix to himself or his Reader) He purposely omitted; the 10, 11, and 14, chapters thereof promise by their titles to yield something of this subject to such students who have the desire and opportunity to survey that ancient Record. Whereof, as I am certified, an ancient Copy is to be seen in Sir *Robert Cottons* Treasury; and my occasions have not permitted me yet to gain a sight thereof, otherwise in this place should have stood so much as had been requisite for this purpose; Instead whereof let my Reader be informed, that such Penances for years, or moneths, &c. were not satisfactions to God for to appease his wrath, and make him amends, (a piece of work which none could or hath performed but *Christ* alone) but rather satisfactions unto the Church, whereby the scandal was taken away, and the sinner by strict observation of the discipline rendered more pious. He that truly repenteth, saith Saint *Ambrose*, ought not onely to wash away his sins with tears, but

*Injustè quantum nostra habet conjectura egerat --- cuius statuta etsi perperam acta enervare illa sedes non omnino voluit. Malmesbur. sup. à.*

*Theodorus Archiepiscopus peccantium iudicia, quantis scilicet annis pro unoquoque peccato quis penitere debeat, mirabili & discretâ ratione describit. Bed. in Chron.*

*Qui agit penitentiam non solum diluere lacrymis debet peccatum suum, sed etiam emendationibus factis operire & regere delicta sua amends*

periora, ut non ei imputetur peccatum, ergo tegamus lapsus nostros posterioribus factis. Amb. l. 2. de Pœn. c. 5.

Satisfactio duplex; 1. Propitiatoria; pro nostris, & totius mundi peccatis, Christus est. 2. Quam Ecclesia exigit à peccatoribus; vindicta est, quam ex præscripto sacerdotis velut spiritualis Medici de nobis sumere debemus, commissis peccatis contraria facientes. Grop. de Sacram. Pœnit. p. 107. Edit. Antw. 1556.

amends being made, to cover and hide his former defects, that his offences may not be imputed unto him; let us therefore cover our former faults with good deeds following. Sound is that distinction of Gropperus; 1. there is a propitiatory satisfaction, which is Christ Jesus, for our sins and the sins of the whole world; 2. and there is another

which the Church requireth of sinners; a Revenge, which according to the prescriptions of the Priest our spiritual Physician, we ought to take of our selves, by performance of holy actions diametrically opposite to the former iniquities; whereby the sinner is humbled, God is pleased, and the Church satisfied, and the dregs of sins by the contrary acts of virtue defecated and cleaned. Thus much for Theodorus.

Anno Dom.

740. Egbert.

(b) Egbert

King of Northumberland.

(c) At York.

Egbert was the next who made Ordinances on this behalf. A man who by his birth as Brother to a (b) King, and by his office an (c) Arch-Bishop might well be sufficiently authorized for such proceedings: A Penitential was by him prescribed, highly esteemed, and carefully preserved amongst the huge devastations of Religious houses and Libraries, although time

Opus penitentialia in magno olim fuisse precio; & post veterum MSS. Codicum insigni cladem, quæ cenobiorum subsequuta est cataclysm, supersunt hodie diversa exemplaria splendide quidem & antiquissimè exarata. Spelman, Concil. pag. 275.

had like to have deprived him of the honour of such a work, and given it to one whose learning and piety might render him suspicious thereof; for placed it is at the end of Venerable Bede's works, under this Title, Canones ad remedia Peccatorum, are antidotes for sinful and sorrowful Patients, and the Priest as Ghostly Physician is taught well and seriously to

Sacerdos Christi sexum, ætatem, conditionem, statum, personam cuiusq; penitentiam agere volentis, ipsum quoz, cor penitentis curiose discernat, — ne post stultum Medicum vulnera animarum fiant peiora.

advise upon the sex, age, condition, state and person of each penitent, to distinguish exactly of several maladies, to enquire (all he may) into the heart and inward man, and accordingly to administer, lest in case he proceed casually, the wounds in the soul by the Physicians folly prove more dangerous;

casually, the wounds in the soul by the Physicians folly prove more dangerous;

dangerous; for prevention whereof, there followeth a catalogue of sins, and of such penances as concern the same; holding an equal analogie between the malady and the medicine, the sin and the sorrow; And all this not to expiate or satisfy for what hath passed, but to exclude and prevent what may follow; non pro remissione peccatorum, sed pro remedio, not for the remission of sin, but for remedy against sin; for so much they are intituled *Excerpta Patrum, & remedia animarum*, Receipts of the Fathers for the souls preservative: All which sowre and sharp potions prescribed by the Ancients serve not to justify, but sanctify real converts. For, the not imputing, the remitting, and covering of sin appertain to the righteousness of faith. Whereof cordial sorrow, fasting and chastising of the body, almesdeeds, &c. are the fruits of a good life, and evidence of justifying faith: Place then such exercises of piety under sanctification, and no incroachment will be upon the solemn Sacrifice of our Redemption. The like construction charity may put upon all the subsequent testimonies. These Canons were decreed about the year of grace 740. at which time Egbert possessed the Chair at York, and for that cause could not be published by Bede, dead four years before, as Florentinus Wigorniensis, and the Savilian Fasti testify.

Non omnibus  
undâ eademq;  
librâ pensan-  
dum est.

Pœnitentibus  
atq; lugentibus  
vera medica-  
menta salutis.

Psal. 36. 1.

Beda in magna  
devotione &  
tranquillitate  
ultimum è cor-

pore spiritum efflavit, Flor. Wigorn. ann. Dom. 735. Chron. pag. 271. Lond. an. 1592. Fasti Regum & Episcoporum Angliæ ad finem Rerum Anglic. Scriptor. Lond. à Dom. H. Savilio editi.

A Council celebrated at Calchurh, situated (as Hollingshed will have it) in the Mediterranean Kingdome of this Island; King Offa then reigning, in the year of our Lord, 787. where a Roman Legat presided, and where were assembled the Arch-BB. and BB. of both Provinces; insomuch that the Noble Collector styles it *Concilium Legatinum & Pan-Anglicum*. A Convocation of all England, where amongst other Chapters and Constitutions, there is one *De conversione, pœnitentia, & confessione*; and for Confession, thus: If any person

Gregorius Ostiens. Episcopus Prædens, ponit Author Antiq. Britan. Ecclesiæ in Northumbria; Hollenshedus verò rectius in regno Merciorum.

Si quis autem  
(quod absit) si-  
ne pœnitentia,  
& confessione  
de hac luce discessit, pro eo minimè orandum est.

Si

(which

(which God forbid) depart this life without repentance and confession, that man is not to be prayed for: and not to pray for the Dead was in that age held as uncharitable, as with us to pray for the living is esteemed charitable. And that Confession there mentioned is the same made unto the Priest, the words immediately before specific, where we read, *According to the judgment of the Priest, and nature of the offence receive the Eucharist, and bring forth fruit meet for repentance.*

*Juxta judicium Sacerdotum, & modum causæ Eucharistiam sumite, & fructus dignos penitentiae facite.*

Inter Concilia Orbis Britan. &c. opera & scrutinio V. C. Henrici Spelman Equ. Auratis: edita Lond. A. D. 1639.

A. D. 924.  
King Athel-  
stane,

King *Athelstane*, who began his reign over all *England* by him reduced to a Monarchy, and Crowned at *Kingston* by *Athelmus* Arch-Bishop of *Canturbury*, in the year of grace 924. amongst his and other laws of the *Saxon* Princes, collected by Mr *Lambard*, this is fifth that was enacted by him; *If any being condemned desire to confess himself unto the Priest, that all do earnestly and diligently promote all the Laws of God, &c.* I have not seen the law in *Lambard* himself, (the Treatise being in few mens hands) where I suppose it is more at large, but rather as it is pointed unto, and the title rehearsed by Doctor *Bridges* in his defence of the Government, &c.

Book 16. pag.  
1360.

Afterwards King *Alfred* wearing the *Diadem* of this land, amongst the *Ecclesiastical* laws by him ordained, and ratified by his Son and successor King *Edward* and *Guthrune* the *Dane* Confederate with *Edward* in the government of *England*, in the fifth chapter is thus ordained;

Gif ðaþe reýldig-man reþræp  
reþræce. 3ýpne ne forþýpne him  
man næpfe?

*Si quis rei capitalis damnatus sua ingenuè Sacerdoti peccata confiteri cupiverit, id ei conceditur. Ita vertit Guil. Lambard, ARXAION fol. 53. Londini ex officina Joani Daiiann. 1568.*

*If any Malefactor guilty of death earnestly require the space and speech of confession or shrift, no man shall ever deny him.* This favour extended to persons condemned to die, argues the use of Confession commonly received, and the good construction thereof, as redounding (in their o-

pinion) to the comfort of such miserable offenders.

Many are the laws both *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil* enacted by  
King



King Edgar, A Prince of pious, and prudent education, who curb'd the oppressors, subdued the Rebels, loved the just and humble, repaired the decayed Churches, and amply endowed them, erected Religious places and Convents, to the Lund & honour of the great Creator: A person of huge discretion, humility and bounty; of much valour and skill in feats of arms, Royally protecting the Laws of his Kingdom with his Militia; his people framed in subjection unto his Nobles, and his Noble-men to the subjection of his sovereign commands, preserving his State in peace, and his just Laws in power; such praises doth the Monk of Worcester heap upon him. Amongst his *gehadoopa* or Ordinances, are extant *Canons*, towards the end whereof is an *Appendix* or *Post-scripte*, containing the total charge of Confession, and the mutual duties requisite in the Penitent and Priest who granteth audience, who is there styled *rcpiſt 7 ȝapla lace*, a *Shriver* and *Ghostly Physician*, and *manna ȝapla lace* the physician of mens souls. The form of confession to be observed by the penitent the specific enumeration of sins, the unfeigned sorrow at the rehearsal thereof, and the voluntary submission to the penance enjoined, are therein delineated. *Let the Repentant person address himself to his shrift right humbly, and say first, I believe in the Lord the Father most high, Who wethedeth all things, &c.* And after a brief recital of his faith, let him in a ruefully-sighing mood, make his confession full devoutly to his Confessor, and bowing down his head say, *I confess unto Almighty God, and to you my Shriver and Ghostly Physician, all the sins which through the desilements of wicked spirits I have at any time committed, other in deed, other in thought, other with male, other with fe-*

S f 2

*Rex decenter instructus, passim improbos oppressit, rebelles redarguit, justos & modestos dilexit, destruktas Dei Ecclesias renovavit, & dilatavit, ad laudem Creatoris summi monasteria constitui iussit — Erat itaq; vir discretus, mitis, humilis, benignus, liberalis, armipotens, iuxta Regni bellicâ potestate regulariter protegens, populum in obsequio principum, principes ad justitiam imperiorum formavit, leges rectas instituit, regno tranquillimo potitus est.* Florent. Wigorn. Chron. p. 355, 356.

*Ealle þa ȝynna beſmitene purdone dæbote 7*

*And cpeðe þonne mid ȝeoƿtzenðum mode ȝearmolice hiȝ andætneſſa to hiȝ rcpiſte onbuzenðe 7*

*Confiteor Deo omnipotenti, & confessorio meo, spiritali medico, omnia peccata que malorum spirituum inquinamento unquam perpetravi, siue in factis, siue in cogitatione, siue cum masculis, siue cum feminis, aliâve creaturâ; siue secundum naturam, siue contra naturam.*

male,

male, other with any kind of Creature, naturally or unnaturally; thence falling into a particular commemoration of such sins by name, as boyled upon his conscience, needing comfort and absolution. And through all that Penitential it is very remarkable (saith that Venerable Antiquary)

Non est autem temerarium, quod hic in iungendis penitentibus nullum usquam ad imagines imperatur confugium, nulla ad Sanctos unquam provocatio, ne ad Virginem ipsam Beatissimam; nec probare videtur author peccatam illam Magnatum penitentiam Romanam (ut perhibent) sultam diligentia. Dn. H. Spelman Concil. p. 476.

recent-Roman impostures. This glorious King Edgar began his reign according to the *Savilian Fasti*, A. D. 959. and finished his reign and life, A. D. 974.

Habentur Canones isti, & penitentialia idiotismo Saxonico vetustissime scripta, in celebri Bibliotheca Collegii Corporis Christi Cantabrig. Dn. Spelman ubi supra.

Also these Canons and Penitential yet remain entire, in an old Saxon Copy and Language, within that famous Library of

*Bennet College in Cambridge.*

Circ. an. 1009. In a Synod held at *Anbam* under King *Ethelred*, the XX Chapter is for making of Confession and taking of Penance, thus; Let each Christian man (as is

Gýme h̃r Ch̃r̃st̃en domẽr ge-  
opne 7 gepñige zelomlice to  
rc̃r̃st̃. 7 un for p̃andoblice h̃r  
r̃inna gecỹðe. 7 geopnlice bete 7 pa  
r̃pa him man t̃axe. pag. 518.

Christiani quique colloquia frequentia & salubria cum Sacerdotibus crebro exerceant; suaque sibi peccata inuerecunde depromant; ac confiteantur, confessaque juxta Sacerdotis institutionem paiteant atque emendent. D. H. Spelman Conc. p. 528.

suitable to his profession) have diligent care of his Christian state, and that he usually frequent shrift and confession; often entertaining Christian and wholesome conference with the Priest; and laying shame aside, confess his faults, and carefully practise such rules for amendment, as the Priest prescribeth. The acts of this Synod both in the Saxon as also in the old Latin tongue, and both revised and

published by that diligent and noble Collector.

In a *Capitular* extant in Saxon and Latin, are contained many Ecclesiastical Constitutions, amongst which is Confession directed

directed unto God in the first place, humbly imploring for mercy, and to the *Priests* likewise, which so far availeth us as by means of the saving *counsel* we receive from them, and the observation of regular *penance*, our souls may be fortified against sin, and our iniquities done away.

Likewise in Paragraph 31. de peccatis in confessione enumerandis, each particular offences are to be opened in confession to the *Ghostly Father*, whatsoever in word, deed, or thought have been committed. And the *Priest* who receiveth Confession is commanded to aid the Penitent, and to lesson him so, that he conceal no known sin at that instant, but make full discovery of all to his b. st remembrance.

These constitutions are found amongst the *Archives* at *Bennet College*, as the same worthy person affirmeth, though he can give no certain account when they were established.

The next Item for Confession is contained amongst the laws of King *Canutus*, who began his reign, *A. D.* 1016, and died 1035. as *Mr Lambard* writeth, or one year later according to the *Savilian Fasti*. Or as *Fabian* will have it, he began his reign *A. D. M. XIX.* or two years sooner according to *Florentius Wigorniensis*, and reigned XX years in great power and justice. He died at *Shaftsbury*, and lieth buried in the old Monastery at *Winchester*. Amongst the

Laws.

Seo andetner he he mayre pæc-  
rtum doþ una synna. þis heo  
to Gode þ on fongnum þram  
halpendum geþeahum. S. 30. pag.  
605.

Confessio quam Sacerdotibus facimus, hoc nobis adminiculum adfert, qui accepto ab eis salutari consilio saluberrimis penitentia observationibus, sive munitis (Leg. munimentis) peccatorum miculas diluimus.

Elie synne mon sceal þis  
recepte andettan. þara he he  
æfre geþremete oððe on worde  
oððe on þeorce oððe on geþolte?

Confessiones dande sunt de omnibus peccatis que sive in opere, sive in verbo, sive in cogitatione perpetrantur. D. Spelm. ib. p. 606.

Se recept sceal aþrian ge hpyl-  
ces þingef þone he to him þis  
þearfe þrýcð. 7 hine laran þ he  
him nan þing nehele. pag. 607.

De loco & tempore quibus tribuenda sunt hæc capitula, nihil adfero. H. S.

A. D. 1010. K. Canutus.

Canut. regnare. S. ccepit, S. an. sal. S. 1016.  
S. defuit, S. hum. S. 1035.

Guil Lambard. Agxæov, fo 94.

Anno 1017. Rex Canutus totius Angliæ suscepit imperium. Flor. Chron. p. 319.

Canut Rex cum viginti annis regasset, vivere destitit apud Scafesbich. Hen. Hunt. p. 208 2.

Laws of this King *Cnutus*, or *Knut*, or rather of King *Edgar's* Laws by him confirmed, and to be observed by all the

*English* and *Danes* his subjs: &c, these are found; *We advise that for all mortal sins committed through diabolical suggestion, the counsel of the Ghostly Father be diligently observed.* Another provision there is also made for guilty persons adjudged to die; *Let liberty be granted to them to confess their sins to the Priest, they much desiring the same; and a pecuniary mulct imposed on such as shall cross or hinder them the opportunity.*

*If a thief or any other person condemned unto death, desire to confess and strive himself, by no means let it be denied him; which whosoever shall hinder, let him make satisfaction to the King, or purge himself.* Again, *He that shall commit fornication with a Woman, or (which is worse) with a married wife, let him do penance according to the Penitential book.* Again, *from Easter unto Whitsontide let no man fast, except it be injyned him*

*for publick penance; wherein is mentioned, publick penance, and the Penitential Book, no question the same with Theodore's; a great argument that if publick confession, sure publick penance was not then discontinued.*

Yea so precious in their eyes was this *Christian practice*, that with the *Ancient English* no religious or solemn act was undertaken, except the parties were *auspicated*, and dedicated by confession. *Ingulphus* relateth of one *Heward* a *Saxon* Lord, groining under the bleeding tyrannie of the *Norman Conquest*, for redress whereof having raised some forces, and to gain the more power over them, he repaired to a religious man, one *Brandon*

*Cnutus* 27 S. 23.

And þe lxxviii — 7 bete swiþe ge-  
opne he his scripeter geþeahþe.  
re ðe ðurh þe oþlas swiþe on syn-  
na be sealle 7. *Præstat etiam apud D.*  
*H. Spelman.* pag. 550.

Gif ðeah swiþor man scripeter  
sweaþe geopne ne pyrne man him  
æfpe. *Lamb. Arætor.* fo. 114. 2 S. 41.

*Si quis rei capitalis damnatus confessionem  
anxiè cupiverit, nemo illum unquam arceat.*

*Si quis Latro, aut alius condemnatus ad mor-  
tem, querit confessionem, nullo modo ei den-  
getur: Quod si quis fecerit, Regi emendet, aut  
se purget.*

*Qui fornicatus fuerit cum alia femina, vel,  
quod peius est, cum alia conjugata, faciat Pœni-  
tentiam secundum librum pœnitentialem.*

*A Pascha usq; ad Pentecosten nullus jejunct,  
nisi sit præceptum pro publica pœnitentia.*  
*R. Cnuti Leges.* MS.

don then Abbot of *Bury*, and desired at his hands to be admitted *Knight*, first premising confession of all his sins, and thereof procuring absolution. And to boot, the same *Historian* tells us what the custome in *England* then was in conferring that Military honour of *Knight-hood*. The Candidate upon the eve before the day of that solemnity was with much compunction to make confession, before the *Bishop*, *Abbot*, or *Priest*, of all his sins, and receiving absolution, to watch all night in the Church at his prayers. On the morn to resort to *Mass*, there to offer his sword upon the *Altar*, which, after the Gospel said, the *Priest* was to hallow, and to put the same upon the *Knight's* neck with a blessing; where he was to communicate the sacred *Mysteries* of *Christ*, and thence to remain lawfully *Knighted*.

Many years after in a Synod held at *Westminster* against the prohibition of the then chief Justice of *England*, by *Hubert* Arch-Bishop of *Canturbury*, A. D. M C C I. and in the third year of King *John*, amongst other constitutions then composed, there is one that bears the title, *De Penitentia*, wherein *Priests* that hear confessions are thus enjoyned; We command that *Priests* in penance diligently weigh the circumstances, viz. the condition of the person and of the offence, the time, place, cause, and continuance in the sin, and devout mind of the penitent: that no such penance be enjoyned upon the husband or wife, as to raise a suspicion of the offence to either party. That no *Priest* after his fall into sin, presume to celebrate at the *Altar* before he make his confession. And to cut off all eccle-

So *sevi legitimum Militem* (premissâ pri-mitiis omnium peccatorum confessione, & eorum perceptâ absolutione) supplicavit.

—Anglorum erat consuetudo, quod qui Militiâ legitimè consecrandus esset, vespere præcedente diem consecrationis sue ad Episcopum, vel Abbatem, vel Monachum, vel Sacerdotem aliquem contritus & compunctus de omnibus suis peccatis confessionem faceret, & absolutus, orationibus & devotionibus & afflictionibus deditus in Ecclesiâ pernoctaret; in crastino quoque missam audiret, gladium super altare offerret; & post Evangelium Sacerdos benedictum gladium collo militis cum benedictione imponeret, & communicatus ad eandem missam sacris Christi mysteriis, denudò Miles permineret. Ingulph. Hist. p. 512.2. Lond.

Precipimus ut Sacerdotes in penitentia diligenter attendant circumstantias, qualitatem scilicet Personæ, & quantitatem delicti, tempus, locum, causam, moram in peccato factam, devotionem animi penitentis; & ut penitentia talis iniungatur uxori, unde non reddatur marito suo suspecta de aliquo occulto & enormi peccato. Idem de Merito conservetur. Nullus etiam Sacerdos post lapsum antequam confiteatur, ad altare presumat accedere celebraturus. Id alicuius ad Sacerdotum cupiditatem rescandam, ut Missæ non iniungantur his in penitentia qui non fuerint Sacerdotes. Roger. Hoveden. annal. pars postea. p. 458.

sion of covetousness in Priests, we add that no penitents shall be enjoined to provide Masses to be said, excepting Priests onely.

A. D. 1105.

Stephan Langton.

Linwood De officio vicarii, l. i. c. statutus, & lib. 5. de pen. & remissis, c. Quoniam.

Rob. Fabians Chron. King John, an. RR. 10. & an. Dom. 1209.

\* Pandolphus.

Caxton, part. 7. of K. John.

(a) In the word of the Pope, he should say.

(b) Received.

Stephan Langton, the same that was obtruded upon King John, and put into the chair at Canturbury by the Pope against the will of his Sovereign Lord, ordained in a Council at Oxford, Ann. M. C CV. That Bishops in their own persons should sometimes receive confessions and enjoyn penances; and therein were provided discreet persons to take the confessions of the Clergy. In whose quarrel the Pope thundred out his interdict against the Church and State. Insomuch (saith Fabian) that the Churches and houses of Religion were closed; that no where was used Mass or Divine Service, nor any of the VII Sacraments; nor child christened, nor man confessed, nor married, except in such places which had purchased licences and special Bulls. But Caxton is more large in discovering this myserie of iniquity, then of great strength: where the \* Legat is brought in telling the King what the cause was; For the wrongs that ye have done to the holy Chyrche, and to the Clerge: and the extent thereof, We assyle clean Erls, Barons, Knights, and all other men of their homages, servis and feantes that they should unto yow done.— and we assyl them all by the authorite of the Pope, and commaund them also with yow for to fight, as with him that is enemy to all holy chyrche. Tho answered the King; What may yow do more to me? Tho, answered Pandolph, we sayen to yow in (a) the word of God, that ye, ne none heir that yow have, never after this day be crowned. The King for all this cursing waxed not pliable to the Popes will; whereupon, The Pope tho sent to the King of France in remission of his sins, that he should take with him all the power that he might, and wend into Englund, for to destruy King John; the tydings wherof put him into such a fright, tho (saith mine Author) the King put him to the Court of Rome, and to the Pope; and tho yaf he up the Realm of Englund for him and his heires for evermore.— and tho took the King the Crown off his head, and set it on his knees, and thisse words said he in hearing of all the great Lordis of Englund; her I resign up the Crown, and the Ream of Englund into the Popis Innocent hands the third, and put me holy in his merci, and in his ordenance: Tho (b) underfenge Pandolph the Crown of King John, and keepid it V. dayes.



I have inserted this story as not altogether impertinent, making good the abused power of the keys at *Rome*, to the disinherison of a supreme *Monarch*, and independent, and the *disfranchise* of a free *State*, wherein the pride of the Pope, or dejection of the Prince, I know not what may be more admired.

Not long after followed *Edmund de Abington*, Arch-Bishop of *Canturbury*, in the year of grace *MCCXXXIV*. who made a constitution for women with childe and near their time, that in respect of the approaching danger they should confess unto their Priest. In his dayes there entered this Kingdom a Legat from *Rome* called *Otho*, sent from *Gregory IX*.

who exacted much upon the Clergy, emunging, and squeezing their purses, so far forth, that Arch-Bishop *Edmund* ( afterwards Saint ) freely and sharply reprehended the polling Legat ; By whose Legantine power it was decreed, That certain discreet and faithful men should be appointed by the Bishop of the Diocese throughout every Deanry, to receive the Confessions of

Parsons, and other Clergie-men of an inferiour order, who might be afraid peradventure, and ashamed to confess unto their Deans. He ordained also general Penitentiaries in Cathedral Churches. And not long after him there arrived another Legat armed with the same power, named *Ostobon*, and he in a Synod at *Northampton* made laws also,

\* *Polydore* tells us that he was sent from Pope *Urban*, but he himself that he \* came from Pope *Clement* ; his coming then could not be in the year of our Lord *MCCLXII*. as *Polydore* placeth it ; nor in the 45<sup>th</sup> year *RR. Henrici 3* ; for *Urban* the *IV*. died not till the year *MCCLXIV*. and *Clemens* who came next after, succeeded in the Papacy *An. 126<sup>4</sup>*, elected at *Perusa* upon the nem *Plat. Creatus absens Perusie per compromissum, presentibus 20. Cardinalibus* Non. Febr. erat enim Legatus in *Anglia*. *Onuphrius*, ib.

A. D. 1234.  
*Edmund de*  
*Abington.*

*Quod propter imminens periculum confiteantur Sacerdoti. Lindw. l. 5. de Pœn. & Remiss. c. in confess.*

*Otho.*

*Edmundus Cantuariensis Archiepiscopus Legati Romani frequentes exactiones, quibus sacerdotes divexabantur, liberè reprehendit. Pol. Virg. l. 6. histor. Ang. p. 300.*

*ut viri prudentes, & fideles constituentur per Episcopum Confessores, quibus Personæ, & minores Clerici confiteri valeant, qui Decanis confiteri erubescunt forsan, & verentur. In Ecclesiis vero Cathedralibus Confessores institui præcipimus generales. Constit. Othonis Rubr. de Confess. Prælatorum.*

*Ostobon.*

\* *Ab Urbano missus anno Dom. 1262. Pol. Virg. hist. Ang. l. 14. p. 257.*

\* *De manu sanctissimi Patris Domini Clementis. Prohem. ad constit. Ostoboni.*

*Obiit Perusii Non. Octob. an. Dom. 1264. Onuphrii Chron. ad fi-*

*Nonis*

T

\*Requirant saltem semel in mense Confessores Fratribus deputatos, ut sic illos qui non frequenter confitentur graviter arguant, & ad confitendum inducant. Confit. O. 80b. Rubric. ut Monachi frequenter confiteantur, & frequenter celebrent.

A. D. 1240.

In confessione audienda b. beat Sacerdos vultum humilem, & oculos ad terram dimissos, nec faciem respiciat confitentis, & maxime Mulieris, & patienter audiat quicquid dixerit, & in spiritu lenitatis supportet eam, & ei pro posse suadeat, & pluribus modis, ut integre confiteatur; Peccata inquirat usitata, inusitata autem non nisi à longe, & per circumstantias, & expertis detur modus confitendi, & inexpertis non datur occasio delinquendi.

Semper majora crimina, & præcipue notoria Majoribus reserventur.  
Linwood lib. 3. de Pœnit. & remiss. c. in Confess.

*Nones of February*, or the fifth day of that moneth, being at that time absent thence, and here in *England*; a *Metachronisme* of three years in *Polydore*, and I could wish that were the worse mistake in his elegant history. Now amongst the Constitutions of this *Legat* to be observed by the Clergy and Laity, there is no mention of Confession, but for the third order the *Religious Voraries* of that age; who like *Meteors* shone above in those dayes in the middle region of the air, and ofttimes went out with as foul a stink as some *Meteors* do; for them it was ordained, \**That Abbots, Priors, and superiours in their absence should procure Penitentiaries, or Confessors once a moneth for thir Friers, and to rebuke sharply such as frequented not Confession, and to indance them to the same.* It seems the *Religious* came but slowly on to shrift in those dayes; and what may we then think of the *Laity*?

The same *Edmund* who moderated the Church of *Canturbury* in the time of that first *Legat Otho*, made a *Constitution* concerning the behaviour and deportment of the *Confesseur* or Ghostly Father, at the time of shrift; *That he should sit with an humble look, his countenance downward, not once beholding the penitents face, especially if a woman, so afford a patient audience unto whatsoever shall be said; and to support with the spirit of lenity, to use all persuasions to extract a plenary con-*

*fession, to enquire after usual and customary sins punctually, and after strange ones afar off, and by circumstances, and with that discretion, as to teach the penitents how to confess, not how to transgress.* "And adviseth the Confessor to pick out the greater sins as "Murder, Sacrilege, Incest, sins against nature, &c. for such "as are of greater place, and set them by, as reserved cases for "the Pope, nor to grant absolution therein, but at the point "of death, and that upon condition of their recovery, they "present themselves at *Rome*, with Letters testimonial from "their own Confessors; of the nature and quality of the offence; the Popes it seems had then seized upon fat sins, as well

as the fat of the Land; this constitution was made about the year of our Lord, 1240.

But *Richard*, surnamed the *great*, his predecessor, and one that should have taken place of him, however the Compilers of the Constitutions have set *him behind*, for he was sacred Arch-Bishop in the year of grace MCCXXIX. He made a very pious and necessary law, *That forasmuch as the soul, far excelleth the body; Physicians are strictly charged, sub interminatione Anathematis, under pain of the Church's Ban & curse to recommend no such thing unto their Patients, for the recovery of their bodily health, which may not be undertaken without danger to the soul; but before all things, to exhort them to send for the soul-Physician, and after spiritual physick hath been prescribed and provided and administered to the soul, then to proceed in the name of God to give Physick to the body.* A Canon which if duly observed by our Physicians, I am persuaded their Physick would work much better than it doth. But now the Spiritual Physician is hardly thought of, and his visits accounted ominous; as if sin were not worth the healing, or he wanted the power and cunning. For after *Luke the Physician*, and *Zeno the Lawyer*, we send for *Barnabas the son of consolation*, when the soul is senseless of his help and Ghostly comfort.

*Bonifacius*, Uncle to *Queen Eleanor*, wife to King *Henry the third*, and advanced to that *Metropolitanical See*, An. MCCXLIV. provided against those that molested or any way hindered such that would do penance, and be confessed, and appointed that convenient time be allotted for that sacred action; and specially to prisoners who many times inhumanly and unchristianly are denied the use hereof, or else so little time afforded unto them as to put them rather into danger of discomfort and de-

A. D. 1229.  
Richardus  
Magnus.

*Cum anima longè pretiosior sit corpore, sub interminatione Anathematis prohibemus, ne quis Medicorū pro salute corporali aliquid suadeat aegroti quod in periculum anime convertatur; — ut aegrum ante omnia admoneat, & inducat ut Medicos invocet animarum, ut postquam fuerit infirmo de spirituali provisum medicamine, ad corporalis medicinae remedium salubrius procedatur.* Linwood. lib. 5. de pœn. & remiss. cap. Cum anima.

*Præcipimus ne aliquis præsumat impedire quin sacramentum penitentiae unicuique petenti liberè impendatur, & spatium liberum confitendi, quod potissimè propter incarceratos suadet, quibus sæpius inhumaniter ne dicamus infideliter denegatur.* Lindw. l. 5. de pœn. & remiss. cap. Cum sacramentum.

*Speration than matter of Spiritual joy and consolation.*

A. D. 1279.

*John Peccam* who late in the See of Canturbury, An. Dom.

*Parochiales insuper sacerdotes caveant, ne alicui dent corpus Domini, nisi prius constet ipsum confessum fuisse, testimonio & iudicio fide-dignorum. Lindw. l. 3. de Missar. celebr. c. Altissimus de terra.*

*MCCLXXIX. Ordered that Parish Priests should diligently take heed, that they administred not the Body of the Lord to any Communicant except it might appear unto them that such a person was formerly confessed by the*

*testimony and judgment of credible persons.*

A. D. 1312.

The next law or Constitution is of *Walter Reginald*, who possessed the place at Canturbury in the year of our Lord

*MCCCXII. He willeth the Priest to rip up the nature of the diseases, and to sift the circumstances of sin, such as are the condition of the person, the quality of the offence, the time and place when and where the sin was committed, all which must be spoken of in Confession. He also appointed an open and visible place for shrift, to cut off all occasion of scandal and suspicion, especially when women make their approaches; admonisheth that Priests impose no such penance to the wife, as to cause suspicion in the husband: To be careful (the nature of the offence re-*

*Diligenter attendat sacerdos circumstantias criminis, qualiter personae, tempus & locum, causam & moram in peccato. — Sacerdos ad audiendum confessiones communicum sibi locum eligat — & in locis absconditis non recipiat alicujus confessiones maxime mulieris — talem injungat uxori penitentiam, ut viro suo non reddatur suspecta — ne aliquibus injungat penitentiam, nisi cum restitutione — consulat Episcopum, vel alium qui vices ejus gerit, aut proventus, & discretos viros, quorum consilio certificatus, sciat quos, & qualiter ligare possit, & absolvere — manus absolutionis non imponi nisi se corrigentibus; &c. Lindw. l. 5. de pen. & remis. c. Sacerdos.*

*quiring) to injoyn such penance, as may imply restitution to the party grieved. To consult with the Bishop or his Suffragan, or with experimented & discreet Priests, that he may know the better whom and what to bind and loose, and where he seeth no probable signs of sincere contrition, and no purpose of abandoning the sin confessed, to suspend his absolution, and to dismiss the sinner for that*

*Prohibemus ne ullus sacerdos lapsus in peccatum mortale ad altare presumat accedere celebraturus, antequam confiteatur, nec puto (ut quidam errantes credunt) quod mortalia deleantur per confessionem generalem. Lindw. l. 3. de celebr. Miss. cap. Linteamina.*

*season with admonitions tending to unfeigned repentance. The same Archbishop also forbade Priests that had fallen into mortal sin, to approach unto the Altar there to celebrate without making their confession; adding that*

*he*

he could not suppose, (as some others erroneously believed) that mortal sins could be washed away by a general confession. Where by the way note that Parenthesis (good Reader) [*as some believe*] intimating that there were in those dayes some that so believed, viz. that general Confession might procure remission of sins, and were not perhaps so punctual for private particular confession, whose belief that Prelate censured for erroneous. By the same man are Ghostly Fathers under a great penalty conjured to secrecy and silence; That if at any time or by any means, or upon passion of hatred, or fear of death, shall lay open by signs, motions, or words, either generally or specially, what hath been privately deposited in Confession, and shall be convicted thereof, he shall be degraded without hope of reconciliation. Also another Constitution of the same mans doing, for the reviving of Publick penance for notorious & scandalous offences, complaining that by the neglect of the ancient Canons the same hath been long buried in oblivion, whereby heinous sins have been the more frequented; and the reynes and rigour of Christian discipline too much remitted. And a \* fourth, for the substitution of a grave and learned Penitentiary in every Deanry, to take the Confessions of the Clergy, residing within the same.

John Stratford Arch-Bishop of Can'rbury, MCCCXXXIV. made a Provisional Law, that Priests should not be cited judicially, and thereby forced either to detect such arcana, as they received under the seal of Confession, or else offer violence to their consciences, lest thereby Parishioners might refuse to come to confession. It seems equivocations, mental reservations, and such jugglings devised to cheat justice, were not up, nor thought on when this course was taken, that Judges should forbear to examine them.

The last of these Metropolitans that made any law for Confession, is Simon Sudbury, who was preferred to that eminency,

Ans.

Nullus sacerdos irâ, odio, metu etiam mortis, et at de gere quovis modo alicujus confessionem signo, motu, vel verbo generaliter, vel specialiter. Et si super hoc convictus fuerit, sine spe reconciliationis non immeritò debet degradari. Lin. l. 5. de pœn. & remis. c. Prohibemus.

ut peccata graviora, & vulgatissimo suo scandalo totam commoverent civitatem, sint solenni penitentiâ castiganda. Lindw. l. 5. de pœn. & remis. c. Præterea;

\* Lindw. lib. 5. de pœn. & remis. c. Licet.

A. D. 1334.

Et illis ex tunc Parochiani peccata reanunt confiteri. Lind. l. 2. de Judiciis. c. Exclusis & infra.

A. D. 1375.

*Confessiones mulierum audiantur in propatulo, quantum ad visum, non quantum ad auditum. — Moncantur Laici in principio Quadragesime, & cito post lapsum confiteri, ne peccatum suo pondere ad aliud trahat. Lind. l. 5. de poen. & remis. c. Confessiones mulierum.*

*Whilest their sins are green in their memory, lest the weight of one sin press them upon another. He ordained likewise to confess, and communicate three times a year, viz. at the three solemn Feasts of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsontide. And to prepare them-*

*Prius tamen se preparent per aliquam abstinenciam de consilio sacerdotis faciendam — vivens ab ingressu ecclesie arceatur, & moriens christianâ careat sepulturâ. Lind. l. 5. de poen. & remis. c. Confessiones.*

*time, and after death his body not to be interred in Christian Burial. By which constitutions we see how other times were appointed for Confession as well as Easter, but then chiefly required;*

*1. Ratione sacramenti, sc. si vult celebrare, vel communicare, vel sacrum ordinem suscipere, &c. 2. Ratione periculi, si est in periculo mortis. 3. Ratione conscientie, ut si dicet sibi conscientia quod statim teneatur confiteri. 4. Ratione dubii, ut si nunc habeat confessoris copiam, ceterum per totum annum non habiturum. Lindwood supra.*

*An. MCCCCLXXV. He ordained women to be striven in an open place, where they may be seen of all, but not heard. — And to admonish the Laity to repair unto Confession every year about the beginning of Lent, and*

*selves with such abstinence, as the Priest should prescribe: And all and every such Persons as should not come to confession, and to the communion once a year at the least, to be debarred from entering into the Church in his life*

*for four causes, and at those times is Confession required, saith Lindwood; 1. In respect of the Sacrament whensoever the same shall be celebrated and received, so upon admission into holy Orders, &c. 2. In respect of the danger or dread of death. 3. In respect of the Conscience, if a mans heart shall tell him that he hath present need of Confession. 4. If it be doubtful a Confessor cannot be had within a year, to take him while we may. Some of these Canonical reasons we have before examined, and censured.*

*A. D. 1533. A book of Religion entituled, Articles devised by the Kings highness, set forth an. Reg. Henrici 8. 28.*

*These were Ecclesiastical Constitutions made by several Church-men in their times. But when Henry VIII had wrested the Supremacy of Spiritual causes from forraign Usurpation and annexed it to the Crown; then for essayes of that new authority, was substituted a Vicegerent for the Clergie. Articles of Religion set forth, and said to be devised by his Highness, which*



which caused the commotion of the \* *Lincoln-shire* men. And in a *Parliament* held at *Westminster* was established (a) *the act of the six articles*, which was named *the bloody statute*, and the *whip of six strings*; which drew so much blood upon poor Christians, and whereof *Auricular Confession* was one of the strings. The procurer of that *Draconical law*, together with the occasion thereof is particularly described by our *Ecclesiastical Annalist* Mr *John Fox*; whoever was the chief doer therein, Ecclesiastical persons were the chief sufferers. The King upon some distaste to his Clergy, was willing to sharpen the edge of the Law against them; and his minde being known, there wanted not abettors to whet him thereunto. So fearful is the condition of the Church, if once removed from under the shadow of the Crown, and wings of the Royal Scepter, and would soon become a prey to the little foxes, if the Kingly-Lion should not protect. And as in that Princes dayes the truth began to take place in the hearts of many, so that party which stood for the old *Mumpsimus*, as well as the other that embraced the new *Sumpsimus*, escaped not the penalty of his rigorous Statutes: that it was no strange spectacle to behold at once a Protestant at the stake, and a Papist at the Galhouse. By that law Incontinency in Priests and Marriage were equally made felony, and death in their persons either to use the sin or the remedy; and the benefit of the Clergy otherwise a privilege, was to them a snare; and that offence capital in Church-men, which then was scarce criminal in the Laity. A man that shall survey the Acts of Parliament under that Prince, shall find that they were truly under him, who melted the courage of both these Houses as wax, making them capable of any impression, and his Will a Law. But of him and his memory enough; as also of such Laws and Constitutions which have to my observation been enacted in this point of Confession, and of what force they are at this present, it were much to be wished the Reverend of that profession would determin.

I will add hereunto such instances as have obviously occurred unto me of those Princes that have worn the Diadem of this Kingdome, and yet not abhorred from this exercise of Piety, but have confessed their sins unto Spiritual Fathers and Pastors

in

\* April 28. an.  
RR. Hen. 8. 31.  
Hall. Chron.  
p. 228.  
(a) Hall. fol.  
224.

Adeo ut uno eodemq; loco, & tempore in Pontificios laqueos, & dilaniationes, & in Protestantes vicicomburio seriretur.

Cambd. Appar. ad Elizab. pag. 67.

unde domi terribilis, & locus tyrannicus habebatur. Camb. ibid.

Sundry Princes of England that used confession.

I.  
King *Edred*  
reigned 10.  
years & died  
A. D. 955.

*Qui missa celeri legatione confessionum suarum Patrem Beatum Dunstanum, scil. Abbatem, accersivit.*

*Vox desuper clarè sonuit, Rex Edredus nunc in pace quiescit.* Florent. Wigorn. ad ann. 955. pag. 353, 354.

II.  
William Con-  
queror.  
*Resumpto ani-  
mo, quæ chris-  
tiani sunt ex-  
cutus est, & in  
confessione, &  
viatico.*  
Malmsb. de  
Will. 1. pag.  
63. col. 2. Lon.

III.  
Margaret Q.  
of Scots.  
\* Sister to Ed-  
gar Ehling.  
*Presbyteris ad  
se accersitis,  
eisque peccata  
sua confessa,  
olco se perungi,  
caelestiq. viati-  
co muniri fecit.*  
Rog. Hoved.  
Pars prior An-  
nal. pag. 266.  
Edit. Lond.  
A. D. 1093.

in hope of absolution: the first is King *Edred*, who ended his reign and life in the year of the Worlds redemption, DCCCCLV. of whom *Florentius Wigorniensis* writeth thus; *The glorious King of England Edred fell sick, in the tenth year of his reign, and despairing of recovery, sent away with all speed for holy Dunstan the Abbot, and Father of his confessions, who in all haste resorted to the Court; and having come half his journey, a voice from heaven sounded clear in his ears, King Edred resteth now*

*in peace. At which voice the horse whereon he sat, not able to bear the burden, sunk under him to the ground, without any harm unto him upon the back. The Kings body was brought to Winchester, and there by Abbot Dunstan decently interred. By which it seemeth Dunstan was the Kings Ghostly Father, though he came too late to take his Confession.*

The second Prince is *William the Conqueror*, whose sickness increasing at *Roan*, and the Physicians upon inspection of his Urine had judged his death to be at hand; upon the hearing whereof (saith *William of Malmesbury*) he filled the room with lamentation, that death had prevented him, long bethinking how to amend his life. But pulling up his spirits, he did the duty of a Christian, in confessing and receiving the blessed Sacrament.

The third is *Margaret the Queen of Scots*, but extracted of the \* English blood, having heard the fatal news of the death of King *Malcolme* her husband, and Prince *Edward* her son, slain by the English as they were invading the Marches of *Northumberland*, she took it so much to heart, saith *Roger Hovedon*, as suddenly she fell into a great infirmity, and without delay having sent for her Priests, she went into the Church, and there made confession of her sins unto them, caused herself to be anointed, and to be honst'd by receiving the Sacrament, beseecking the Lord with fervent and daily prayers, that he would not permit her any longer to live in this sorrowful life, and her prayer was heard; for the third day after the slaughter of her husband, being dissolved from the bonds of flesh, (as is believed) to the joys of eternal salvation. This sad accident fell out in the year of Grace *MXCIII.* and the VI. year of *William Rufus*.

The

The next is *William Rufus*, who came to an unfortunate end by the glance of an arrow, whether aimed at him or no, is uncertain, or whether he stumbled upon the same; but by the wound thereof he took his death, as he was hunting in the New Forest called *YTENE*, 2<sup>d</sup> day of *August*, and in the XIII year of his Reign; which sudden accident was the more lamentable, as preventing his repentance

and confession, and other comforts his soul might have found, if sickness had given him notice of his approaching end. The want whereof *Eadmer* a grave Historian thus lamenteth; Upon the second day of August he fetched his last breath, for upon that day breaking his fast, he came into the Forest to hunt, and there was wounded with an arrow; and forthwith died impenitent and unconfessed, and was immediately abandoned of all men. The want of Confession had not been worth the noting, if the use thereof at the last close had not been generally received.

To him succeeded his Brother *Henry I.* a moderate, and as those times afforded, a learned Prince; who after he had swayed the Scepter full XXXV years and odd moneths, then being in *Normandy*, sickned of that disease whereof he died: And perceiving his own weakness, sent for *Hugh*, whom he had constituted his first Abbot at *Reading*, (where he founded a goodly Abby, and there lieth interred) and after advanced him to the *Metropolitcal* See at *Roan*; which Arch-Bishop in an Epistle to Pope *Innocent*, relateth the pious end of that Prince thus; He being surprised with a grievous sickness, dispatched a Post to us with all haste to come unto him; we came and abode with him being full of pain for three dayes, and as we advi-

petitione oleo sancto eum inunximus, & sic in pace quievit. *Hugo Rothmag. Epist. ad Innocent. 3.* extat apud *Malmesb. hist. Novell. l. 1. p. 100. col. 2. London.*

IV.  
*William Rufus.*  
A. D. 1102.

*In Nova Forresta que lingua Anglorum Ytene nuncupatur, a quodam Franco Walero Tyrello sagittâ incautè directâ percussus vii<sup>2</sup> finivit 4. Non. Augusti ser. 5. indict. 8. Florent. Vigorn. Chron. p. 469, 470.*

*Secunda dies Augusti vidit eum expirantem, siquidem illa die mane pransus in sylvam venatum ivit, ibiq; sagittâ in corde percussus, impenitens & inconfessus e vestigio mortuus est, & omni homine mox derelictus. Eadmer. hist. Nov. l. 2. p. 54.*

V.  
*Henry I. Beauclerk.*

*Prout ei dicebamus, ipse ore proprio sua confitebatur peccata, & manu propria pectus suum percutiebat, & malam voluntatem dimittebat — pro nostro officio tertio eum, & per triduum absolvimus. Crucem Domini adoravit, corpus & sanguinem Domini devotè suscepit, Eleemosynam suam disposuit — ipsius piâ*

sed him, he confessed with his own mouth his sins, and with his own hand beat his breast, and put away his evil mind. Through Gods counsel and ours, and other Bishops, he promised to observe and amend his life, and by reason of our office, we thrice in three dayes space absolved him. He revered the Lords Cross, devoutly received the Body and Bloud of the Lord, gave almes,— at his request we anointed him with holy chrisme, and so he rested in peace. This Prince departed this world in the year of our Lord God, MCXXXVI.

## VI.

Richard I.  
1200.  
\* Poysoned  
arrow.  
Caxton, part.  
7. in Rich. 1.

The like preparations of dying well were made by that *Cœur de Lion*, King Richard I. who besieging the Castle of *Gaillard* in *Normandy*, was wounded in the arme with a venomous \* quarrel; The Castle won by a sharp assault, and the souldier that hurt him apprehended, the King finding the wound to be mortal, caused him to be brought into his presence. And (saith Caxton) *when he come before the King, the King axed him what was his name, and he said mi name is Bartram Gutton: wherfor, said the King, hast thou me slayn, fith that I did the never none harme? Sir, said he, though ye did me never none harme, ye your self with your hond killed my fadre, and my brother, and therfor I have quyte now your travel. Tho said King Richard, he that died upon the cros to bring mans soul from pyne of Hell, foryef the my death, and I also foryef it thee. Tho commaunded he that no man should him misdo— and the VI day after the King did sbrive him, and sore repentance having of his misdeedis, and was housled and anoynted.*

*Pœnitentiâ malè habentis astè vitæ affectus, de peccatis illicè ritè confessus est, ac Euchari-  
stia multa cum veneratione sumptâ percussori  
pepercit. Pol. Virg. hist. Angl. l. 14. p. 257.*

Thus much out of that old Chronicler concerning the last demeanour and death of this heroical Prince, forgiving him that was the author thereof. He left this life when he had reigned IX years, VIII moneths and odd dayes.

## VII.

K. Richard II.  
A. D. 1400.

And the miserable end of King Richard II. deprived first of his Crown, and consequently of his life, murdered at *Pomfret-Castle* by that wretch Sir *Pierce of Exton*, and VIII villaines in harness, is not impertinent: where the King wrested a Bill out of the first mans hands, and manfully defending himself, had slain IV of the Assaylants, was trayterously felled to the ground.

ground by Sir *Pierce*, and then shortly rid out of the world (saith my Historian) without either confession or receipt of Sacrament; bewailing the loss of opportunity to prepare himself for death by confessing his sins, and receiving the blessed Sacrament no less, than the *Parricide* it self, though most inhumane, treacherous and barbarous. And thus have I related what these Princes did at the evening and shutting up of their time; casting up their audit unto God, and making an account here, that they might not be called to an after-reckoning, wherein I doubt not but that other Princes did as they did, though our *Annalists* may be silent therein; and my small store-house, and *Adversaria* be no better provided of more Collections. Take these *Laws* and *Examples* in good part, (Gentle Reader) and make the best construction thereof, and of my self, for the relation.

Hall Chron.  
in Henry 4.  
pag. 14. 2.

### The Conclusion.

SO by Gods mercy, and the guidance of his good Spirit, we are now in the haven, and at the end of this Treatise. A journey hath been taken not long, (to speak truly) nor tedious, but dangerous and difficult; spent rather in the beating of unknown paths, or renewing of ancient tracks worn out, and well-nigh defaced with desuetude, than in following any usuall rode or beaten way before us; for in this voyage (we may boldly say) not many Travellers, especially that set out from home with us, have kept us company. And yet the subject matter, as it concerns all Christians, so I suppose, is inferior to none of those *Mysteries* in power and operation, that are committed to the Lords Stewards, much profiting, but much opposing fleshly wisdom; as the best potions are the most bitter, and the more repugnant to the disease, the more

\* 2 Cor. 11. 30.

fanative. The Spirit is contrary to the flesh, and the work of Christiarity is to deny our selves, and to take up *Christ's crosse*. You shall hardly see a man that will lay open his infirmities, though I read of an *Apostle* \* that gloried in his. Our humour is naturally Pharisaical, to make clean the outside of the Platter, and who is he that will turn the worst side outward? Very few will speak evil of themselves, and fewer that will suffer others to do so with patience. *It is a fringe of pride* (saith Gregory)

*Superbie vitium est, ut quod de se fateri quisquis quasi sua sponte dignatur, hoc sibi dici ab aliis dedigneur.* Greg. Mor. l. 12. c. 51.

Pour monstre cette propriété, & inclina de l'homme a se tenir close, & couvert en ses iniquitez, & la victoire, qu'il avoit obtenu sur lui, de s'accuser soi mesme, &c. D. Bess. Carême. Tom. 2. p. 716, 717.

Certe sublimis apparet (Job) etiam in peccatis suis — Ego in eo non minus admiror confessionem humillimam peccatorum, quam tot sublimia facta virtutum — Unumquodq; malum quumvis robustius vitetur, tamen humilior proditur. Greg. ib.

*in a man freely to disparage himself, and yet to take it ill at anothers hands that shall do so. If I covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquities in my bosome, Job 31. 33.* thereby intimating our natural inclination from the loyns of our first Parent, to cover our sins; and his victory over the same, to be his own accuser. *Job* was admired by all for his rare virtues; *But in my eyes he seemeth marvellous in his sins,* (saith Gregory) Let other men extoll his chastity, commend his integrity,

praise the bowels of his pity and goodness, *for my part I no less wonder at the humble confession of his sins, than so many famous exploits of his virtues*, it being as great a conquest to trample down fame and shame, by laying open our sins, as to resist, and not commit them; for though greater strength be shewed in shunning sin, yet greater humility is discovered in confessing of sin: for by the former *our sins* are conquered, and by the latter *our selves*. And I am of opinion many are displeased with Confession, not for any hurt or distaste at the thing it self, but at the difficulty thereof; and abstain from it, not as an act unlawful, but unseemly to men of their quality, and disagreeing with their disposition. No small argument that it is a work of grace, whereas our corrupt nature so much frowneth at it. But how burthensome soever it may seem to flesh and blood, sure the *burthin of a wounded Conscience* is greater, *for who can bear it?* *It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost and unto us* (as the first Council

Acts 15. 28.



cil in the Church decreed) *to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.* It being not the least part of prudence to cut off things superfluous, as withall to impose necessary. This later age hath not been so much a *vintage*, as a *pruning* of the Churches *vineyard*: And 'tis not impossible for a quick and fruitful branch to be amputated and cut off amongst so many fruitless and unprofitable. Those *Weeders* had need to have great care, that pull not up some hopefull blades amongst store of weeds. There is not any (I suppose) that can *thoroughly purge his floor, and gather the wheat into his garn.* but he whose *fan is in his hand, and will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.* I honour the memory of the first *Reformers* of the Church as good men, yet but men, and not exempted from errour; and verily believe that the great abuse and juggling under the sacred veil of the keys, Confession and Absolution; the merchandize and trading in Indulgences, the lewd profaning of Ecclesiastical censures, made them less zealous for the true use of Confession, the keys and censures; and so by a kind of connivency there waxed a general coldness in all the parts of the mystical body of Christ, in the commendable and necessary exercise thereof. The Ministers and Pastors of *Christ's* flock could wish no sins for Confession, no perplexity for the Conscience, no wounds, no diseases in the soul, and that all the flock were so sound and whole, that there needed no Physicians. But they may wish the best, and fear the worst, and find too much work for Physicians, if thoroughly imployed; too many bonds and bars for their keys, and too many infirmities for their power to work on: Confession cannot be out of request so long as there are so strong temptations to assault, and so weak a fort and poorly man'd to defend. Let then thy soul be of more worth than thy body, and to the healing of spiritual wounds lend a quicker ear; for thy bodily health what wilt thou not undergo? what not endure? lancing, burning, purging, vomiting: and is a little shame in confession, a small austerity in penance tedious to be undertaken for thy souls good? thou

Matth. 13. 9.

Matth. 3. 12.

Τὸς μὲν τὸ σῶμα ὁ ἰγνείας ἐνεκα,  
 καὶ τομαὶ καὶ καθάρσεις, καὶ φαρμακοποσίας  
 ὑποβάλλουσα. Clem. Alex. Str. lib. 1.  
*Ut valeat corpus, ferrum patieris & ignes;*  
*Arida nec sitiens ora rigibus aqua:*  
*Ut valeas animo, quicquam tollere recuses;*  
*At pars hec pretium corpore majus habet.*

setteft

settest not that price upon the better part of thy self, which thou oughtest, that refusest such receipts for the safety thereof.

ὅ γὰρ ὁ μὲν τὸ τῶ σώματι νόσον ἀπα-  
γων εὐεργέτης δόξῃ, ψυχῆς δὲ ὁ πειρά-  
ματι ἀπαλλάττειν ἀδικίας, ἢ μᾶλλον ἂν  
εἰν κηδεμών, ὥσπερ ψυχῇ σώματι ἐν-  
τιμώτερον. *Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. p.*  
*258.*

For (saith a Father) he is nothing  
near such a Benefactor which freeeth  
the body from a disease, as he that de-  
livereth the soul from unrighteousness,  
in regard the soul is far more precious  
than the body. Let then the great

benefit redounding to the soul by  
confession vanquish the shame and natural repugnancy. De-  
clare thou thy sins first that thou mayest be justified, *Esay 43.*  
*76.* as the *LXX* I read it. Justification follows upon that de-  
claration, not condemnation: Whereupon Saint *Chrysostome*  
assignes the difference betwixt the consequent of confessing at  
the tribunal of God, from terrestrial bars: For at these external

ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ ἑξωθεν δικαστηρίου καὶ  
τῆ κατηγορίας καὶ ὁμολογίας τοῦ ἀμαρτημα-  
τιων θανάτου, ἐπὶ δὲ τῶ θεῷ δικαστηρίου καὶ  
τὴν κατηγορίαν σφραγίδος. *Chrys. eis τὴν*  
*Ὁσίαν λογ. γ. tom. 5. p. 139.*

tribunals below, after accusation and  
confession of sin, death followeth: but  
at the divine Tribunal, upon confes-  
sion, Where the sinner accuseth himself,  
there goes a Crown. And herein is a  
beam of Gods mercy, in not ex-  
torting Confession (as our Judges

do) to the prejudice of the accused, but as a Physician to  
know our diseases, for their better healing; and his justice too  
after a sort herein shineth, that the sinner in confessing might  
blush for sin, whereof he was not ashamed in committing. By  
this means doth the Shepherd of the flock come by notice of the  
several kinds of infirmities wherewith his sheep are troubled,  
and can the better prescribe the remedies. By this discovery of  
sin many disorders may be rectified at this consistory of Conscience,  
which no Political Benches of justice can search into, or  
redress; hereby secret wrongs may be recompensed, secret  
amends may be made, secret injuries remitted, and secret en-  
emies reconciled. The greatest gainer is the Penitent himself;  
for besides the asswiling of his offences, he hath purchased a  
Counsellor to advise him for the best how to avoid sin; a Com-  
forter to embalm his wounded conscience from Gods word,  
sweeter than the honey or the honey comb; and an Advocate to plead

plead on his behalf to God with prayer and intercession. By this high minds are abated, and a sinner waxeth sensible of a higher power incensed by his sin. By this unbridled offenders are kept in some awe and discipline. By this Gods Priests are the more revered, and his ordinance in their hands more powerful. In a word, amongst all the Tribes, *Judah*, that is *Confession*, hath the *Star*, *Scepter*, and *promised seed*. The Answer then returned by the *Neophytes*, or new Christians in *Japonia*, is very remarkable; when *Xaverius* had often demanded of them, *what rites and exercises in the Christian Religion seemed unto them most profitable and availing, constantly answered, those two without all controversy, the Communion and Confession.*

*Percontanti mihi quosdam Religionis Christianæ ritus, quæve instituta sibi maxime crederent profutura; Duo illa semper sc. confessionem & communionem sine controversia responderunt. Epist. Japon. l. 1. p. 59. 2. Dilinguæ 1571.*



## Κ Ο Λ Ο Φ Ω Ν

Ad eos qui in libellum inciderint

ΕΥΦΗΜΙΖΕΙΝ.

Περὶ γυναι  
Luna à Sole  
in Enneade-  
cacteride est,  
46'. 56" cui  
in signifero  
respondit  $\frac{3}{4}$   
gr. 16'. 56".

**F**ULL Nineteen courses hath that glorious *Bridegrome* of heaven made, and in which *Εννεαδεκα-έτηεις* or space the other *Luminary* hath through many various revolutions returned to the same point in the *Celestial girdle*, since this *Treatise* past the *Authors* last hand and eye, having (for ought he knew) like the *Antique* subterraneous *Obeliskes* lyen buried, or by the late more then Civil wars been driven into coverts: in which process of time being grown out of knowledge and memory, is by the hand of that immense providence sweetly disposing all things, and poyling past and future events as two scales in a

Οὐδὲ νοῦσαι ἅμα πρῶτον καὶ ὀπίσσω.

1 Cor. 15. 8.

balance, awaked and exposed to publick view, but as *ἐκτρωμα*, an abortive issue, or one born out of due time; for serene and quiet were the seasons, and *Truth* seemed to look down from heaven, when these conceptions were formed; giving hope also to this issue of entertainment. But alas those *Halcionia* are fled, and dayes of calamity have succeeded; and the *Cloud* upon us when dispersed,

disperſed, *He onely knoweth*, in whoſe hands *are times and ſeaſons*, and we may ſigh out theſe ſad complaints in the *Churches* name; Where is thy *nurſing Parents*, Reverend *Paranymphs*, honourable *Pillars*, vigilant *Officers*, devoted *members*, thy fenced *discipline*? all which made Thee terrible as an army with banners. Is not thy *vineyard* laid waſte, thy *breasts* dried up, thy *Common-Prayer* and *adminiſtration* of the *Sacraments* laid aſide, and the *glory* of thy *Liturgy* departed? the *diſpenſers* of thy *Treasures* diſeſteemed? and what hope can there be for the practice of this piety, where the *keys* and *Stewards* are deſpiſed; or to enlarge thy rites, where thy juſt claimes are denied? much leſs to promiſe the admiſſion of *this piece* of diſcipline, where the *Nerves* of all thy *Eccleſiaſtical policy* are diſſolved? where the *garments* of thy *Revenews* are parted amongſt *Souldiers*, and thy *ſeamleſſe coat* of diſcipline which they ſpared, *rent* by others? though found they are, that *afſociate* their endeavours to make up thoſe breaches, but at a loſs; whereas no *form* will fit, but what *conſex'd* by thy *Bridegroom*, or his *Apoſtles*, and in all ages continued upon thy back, till ſtripped by *Sacrilegious* hands, and defaced.

Cantic. 6. 4.

Great and manifold are the inſinuations of the *Old Serpent*, and his prevalencies more by ſecret *Mining* againſt *Gods building* than open force, as not ignorant how ugly ſin ſheweth in its own colours, which he diſguiſeth under cunning *intrigoes* and appearances of virtue, which the *Apoſtle* termes the *ſleight of men* and *cunning craftineſſ* and the *wiles of the Devil*, ambuſhes, or

Κυβερία ἢ ἀνθρώπων ἐν πανουργίᾳ πρὸς  
τὴν μεθοδείαν τῆς πλάνης. Eph. 4. 14.  
Ἐν μεθοδείᾳ τοῦ διαβόλου, cap. 6. 11.  
Aſſechangeſ del Diablo. Bibl. Hiſpan.

X x

entraping

entrapping plots. The Clothing of Heresies under *Scripture phrases* is his old *sophistry*, as the honey used to besmeer the deadly cup, that the poison may be more sweetly devoured. Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost

*Fatores calcis elegit velut quodam aromate aspergit, & austeram quendam temperaturus pocula, prius ora melle circumlinunt.* Vincent. Lyr. contr. Harrel. cap. 35.

Rom. 2. 22.

thou commit *Sacrilege*? where the abhorring Idols is *ισεοούρν*, the over-spreading sanctity, but the *commission of Sacrilege* *ισεοουσία*. The spoils of the Church are the plotted design. An ancient and prudent Historian was careful to advertise his Reader of the wide distance betwixt the *causes* and *occasions* of war; and tells us, that the *causes* why the sword is unsheathed shall be concealed till *occasion* of blows is offered, the *beginning* whereof may probably be maintained, whereas the *real cause* would make the undertakers ashamed. Some occasions might be tendred to disgrace the *Clergy*, which censorious spirits readily seized on, the design through

*Neque unquam Ecclesia status ita tranquillus, ut non aliquod fuerit aliquando dissidium.* Heming. ad Principes German. apud Sleidan. Commentar. l. 9. p. 264. Argentorati edit. an. 1611.

*Ἀνδρεῖς δ' ἱερεῖα, &c. Homer.*  
—ἐν ἐν ἀγνῆτι· ὅν ἡτίμω· Ἀγαμέμνων.

their sides being to wound the *Profession*, though indirectly, and to heap contempt upon *Gods own Ordinance*. The *Heathen* by the spectacles of nature could discern the *Priests* to be worthy of honour, and the affronts done

to them to draw judgments upon the heads of scorners, who striving to render the *Fathers* of the Church scandalous, have proved themselves ridiculous.

I.

It will not be loss of time to view succinctly what engines *Satan* hath planted, and what *Idols* have play'd to work his pleasure upon the Church of God. A double drift he had, 1. to make *hereticks* of the unfetted religi-



ous, 2. and the profane persons to become *Atheists*; rendring *these* of no religion, and *those* of worse than none; and in whose persons he despaired to root out Religion utterly, He moveth every stone, how it may become vaine and unserviceable, by the erection of many though false and ridiculous; like that *Valentinian College*, and *Gnosticks* of old, bringing in *Confusion* under the title of Religion; wherein the rabble of rude inventions exceed the Poetry of the Ancient *Pagans*. How pregnant this Lying Spirit is in the mouth of his Adherents, the present monstrous-shapen heresies are open proofs; in whose conceits Religion seems like a crack'd Mirror, broken in pieces by their vain imaginations, and reflecting multiplied images of their *conceited Divinity*, as if the high-way of the Church were a walk too publick, and too much beaten, and their *spawn* good for nothing but to *increase and multiply*. O how secure are those *paths*, fenced with the *authority of sacred Scripture*, and the *tradition of the Catholick Church*? They are assuredly in the sight who go after such directions; as hands staied and guided by a rule draw straighter lines than those that are left to their own wills and motions.

And albeit that *πολυκεφαλὸς, ἢ multiplex* ὀργάνων πλῆθος, that more than many-headed *Hydra* of several opinions, and *harvest* of numerous errors may be esteemed with *Machiavels* *Confidents* a State-policy, to huty the people, and wheel them about with divers *Sects* and new religions, thereby multiplying several *claims* and respective *interests*; begetting so many *upstartments*, and

*Confusio prædicatur, dum religio asseveratur.*  
Tertul.

*Ab Apostolis—traducum fidei, & semina doctrinae Ecclesie mutuata sunt, & quotidie mutantur ut Ecclesie fiant.* Tertul. præscript. contr. Marc. 20.

*Fides munus divine legis autoritate, tum deinde ecclesie Catholice traditione.* Vinc. Tyr. cap. 1.

*Fides in regula posita est—cedat curiositas fidei, cedat gloria saluti.* Tertul. præscript. cap. 14.

Isai. 9. 21.

Bellum Hereticorum est pax  
Ecclesiae. Hilar.

II.

special dependences; yet those *Pratorian Cohorts* devised at first for the safeguard of the *Roman Emperours*, proved their Confusion; and *Ephraim* may rise against *Manasses*, and both against *Judah*. In the mean space the dissensions of Hereticks afford some peace to the labouring Church, who from a firm rock beholds at sea their stormes and confused struglings.

By no imposture doth *Satan* gain upon the Church more, than under that specious pretence of *Reformation*. Divers good Christians of religious humours, as averse to *abuses*, have lent too quick an ear to such *Zealous* out cries; and in sober truth, as it is a necessary duty to cut off enormity and discriegled inordinances, so a difficult office to carry an even hand; where a business of that consequence desires to be undertaken upon assured grounds, and to be unalterably preserved, lest the remedy may be more nocent than the disease; ordinary defects would better be charitably concealed, than publish'd to a scandal; besides *ambitious heresie* may lurk under this covert, and such spirits of no great altitude at their highest growth of place and preferment, may attempt to trouble the waters, to advance their own interests; and who in the *old form* were but the *tail*, might become the *head* in the new *Classis*. If we still continue Scepticks in the settlement of Church and Doctrine, without the attainment of any period, *Ubi erit finis quarendi, ubi statio credendi, ubi expunctio inveniendi?* when will there be an end of quarrelling, a standard of faith, or a full point of enquiry? It was the glory of *Queen Elizabeth* (whose times none behold without reverence) to have proceeded in reforming with much peace and prudence; confining reformation to choise and necessary points, and  
her

Ternul. præscript. cap. 10.

her self ever after to her first resolves, which seems no less, by that wise answer or Oracle she returned to a Pragmatick Petition, preferred at the entrance to her reign, wherein was contained, *That it being a gracious time of enlarging prisoners, there remained four or five yet in durance without cause, and so straightned in an unknown tongue, as they could hold no commerce with the people; such were the four Evangelists and Saint Paul.* To which request *She* discreetly answered, *It were well the prisoners minds were first known, if they desired so to be freed:* the heat of that Zealot, and many others being by that her sage response, and mature proceedings much abated. But that *Reformation* is never more justly suspected, when set on foot by the sons of Machiavell to keep up their reputation with the people, as if they would appear with eyes more intent upon disorders, careful of the publick, and all their thoughts being how errors may be redressed; by such arts continuing their credit, and at once under the noyse of clamorous Reformers, conveying to themselves the wealth of Sacred things devoted to augment true piety, and to add lustre to the greatness and majesty of Religion; for that *Reformation* ὁμολογούμενος would be deemed undertaken upon Spiritual grounds, which in the entrance and ending thereof is performed without sacrilege. The Rebels in *Edward sixth's* time, as if *Piety* were chiefly aimed at, and a shew of justice levelled, caused *Psalmes* to be sung, and *Sermons* to be made under

Neque id præceptis, aut acri impetu, sed prudenter, & temperate.

Aulicus quidam libellum supplicem ei porrexit — restare adhuc quatuor aut quinque viatos, idque immerito; — eos esse quatuor Evangelistas, ac Apostolum Paulum diu in ignota lingua, ac carcere conclusos, & inter populum conversari non posse; illis se libertatem ut reliquis petere: cui illa prudentissimè; sciscitandum adhuc melius ab ipsis esse, utrum liberari vellent. MS. in felicem memoriam Elizabethæ R. Authore sui seculi Nestore Jacobo Ley, Marlbrigii Comite, summo Angliæ Quæstore.

Speed in Edw.  
6.an. 111.

Potentissimum  
ad ciendas se-  
ditiones etum  
religio. Thuan.

Ex religionis  
pallio penulam  
Hispanicam fa-  
cere. Thuan.

der an *old tree*, and a *Tribunal* was there erected, which they styled the *Oak of Reformation*. God best knoweth how many such practices have since been set on foot under the *shadows* of such *Oaks*; where *Religion* is pretended the *incendiary* to kindle, and *Trumpet* to blow the coles, and *ensigne* to hold forth and carry on *seditions insurrections*. Undoubtedly there hath not issued a more dangerous ambush for *Sacrilege*, to surprize the possessions of the Church, and to *Secularize* her *patrimony*, than forth of this denne. The *Parties* to the late *league* in *France* thereby reconciling to themselves no small credit and power; till at length it was discovered, that they went about to *contrive* a *Spanish-cloak* of the *cloth* of *Religion*: so hugely is *Religion*, and the sincere *professors* thereof by such pretenders scandaliz'd and abused.

Of late times many have been the *prejudices* had against the *Clergy*, and happy was the *Envious man* to have found a *probable fallacy* for his malice to work upon; the *Church* was then leading forward to devotion, which the Devil seeing, thought it seasonable to trip up the *proceeders* heels in those *paths* of *Righteousness*, and there to make his batteries where the fort was weakest, the defendents fewest, and the entry easiest. But at what sparks the persecution first kindled, those *Incendiaries* know best that first blew the coals. In which *Agon* (besides their intention) new combats, Crowns and triumphs were by them dedicated. Persecutions, no news to the *Church*, seemed new to our peaceful estate. *Providence* ordaining a *Scene* for us, and that we also should bear a part, and be acquainted with the troublesome *style* of the *Primitive times*; and our flourishing Church to be tried, with what upright-  
ness

nels *she* would demean herself in raging seasons, that by patience and long suffering *she* might reach those laurels, triumphant in glory the Stars far under; A Patron and Defender *she* had in whom *she* much gloried, and of whom (as times are) *she* is not ashamed; that *Antiqua Moles*, great and venerable Pile will yet stand in our greatest City, as a monument of *his* intended munificence, and the present usage; whose Faith *he* maintained with his Pen, defended with his Sword, and sealed with his Blood: By him were her immunities asserted, Patrimony protected, and Discipline vindicated; & *quid amplius faciendum fuit vinea? What could be done more unto the vineyard?* But her Grapes were wild, and God was just, and Satan malicious, and man avaritious, and the wild Boar ready upon all occasions to root up the vineyard; Insomuch that her Angels are fallen, her fixed Stars become planetary, and that whilome *Stupor mundi* *clerus Britannicus*, as one of her Mellifluent Senators term'd her, is in her exile still *stupor mundi*, the amazement of the world, being made a gazing-stock both by reproches and afflictions.... wandering about in sheepskins, and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted and tormented: upon whom how fordid and mean soever such clothing be, yet if composed by affliction, and worn with patience, not Solomon in all his royalty was so arrayed. And to considerate minds the lightness of affliction in one scale, and the weight of glory ponderated in the other; the eternity of the one, and the momentaneous brevity of the other would appear so heavenly wide, that all Gods people could not be offended to be clad as one of those.

*Tam mala Pompeii, quam prospera mundus adorat.* Lucan.

*Reformatam Apostolicam religionem scriptis nervose confirmans, ne fuso tantum amentamento, sed sanguine vindicans.* Elench. motuum Numer.

Esay 5. 4.

Bishop Hall, τὰς ἀποκαταστάσεως μετὰ τὸ γένος αὐτῶν. Heb. 10. 33.

2 Cor. 4. 11.

Μικροὶ γὰρ ὄντες καὶ ἀνθρώπων, οὐκ ἐν δυνάμει.

*τινὲς ἐν δέσμασιν ἀγγέλων, καὶ πολλοὺς περιστάσεων.* Clem. Rom, Epist. ad Corinth. 1. pag. 23.

There

- I. There are amongst the sons of men three different dispositions; the first inept and *incapable* of instruction, and not to be wrought upon by afflictions; whose Hearts are so hardened upon the anvil, and by the God of this world, as not made *malleable* or mollified by the *thunder* of any judgments: so secured with answerable success in all their undertakings, as to kick at the least contradiction; wherein humane felicity is the mist

Ἄνθρωποι οὐκ ἐκείναι δὲ τὴν οὐρανὴν καὶ τὴν  
οὐρανὴν τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἐστὶν Demosthen.

and veil, hindring the sight from distinguishing good and evil; unto such undeserving persons

Ἐπειδὴν οὐ  
γὰρ ὁ καὶ ἐν  
ἀναμνήσεσιν  
καὶ κελύβιν. Isid.  
Pelus. lib. 2.  
Epist. 122.

and undeserved favours, like the Rhodians always enjoying the *Sunshine* of prosperity, without the least cloud of sorrow, or *spark* of piety; that onely do evil, and suffer none; we keep silence and stand amazed, and are filled with expectancy what the judge of all the world will do.

## II.

Isa. 1. 5.

A second sort are *non-proficients*, not bettered the least tittle by afflictions, have been long kept at school with no improvement; whose dross in the crucible is so much, and rust in the Iron so deep, and spots in the garment so foul, as no Fullers sope can cleanse; against such there goes out a speech from the Lord, *Why should ye be stricken any more?* They are no longer for the rod, their stubbornness is mature for other judgments. A sad sign the disease is deplorate and desperate, when the sovereign Physician gives the patient over.

## III.

A third sort of Scholars much bettered and refined in the school of the Cross, who are rooted most when most tempested; as the Moon in her change most obscure to the earth, but most resplendent towards heaven; and the *Ship* tossed with winds, beaten upon rocks, and rolled in waves, upheld by divine power is

not



not broken with that shipwrack, but rides securely, where the *hand* of the *most High* supporteth, and where *supreme care* is the *rudder* of that *ship*, the *ship* of that *Navy*, and the *Navy* of that *Pilot* and *Admiral* who steereth all with his *Providence*, it shall not miscarry. It is much to be desired of us (and desired I fear it may be, more than yet expected) that all of us in *one vessel* were bound *one way*, and would not vainly imagine to sail divers courses in one ship, but rather like that Apostolical assembly, be *ἐκδομαδὸν*, all of one accord in one place; and like Brethren to dwell together in Unity. And that such harmony were set in our Church musick, as all parts might agree to meet at the service; and that several interests might not break the peace of Christendome. The common enemy to the Cross of Christ, having from their mutual discords drawn no small advantage; nothing more encouraging the barbarous armes of the Ottoman family against them, than Civil broils. And in our divided world there are not more dangerous inlets of ruine than our domestical divisions; our sins having separated from God; and our discords from our selves, self-interests having eclipsed a glorious Church, and self-opinions well nigh extinguished it. Philip of Macedon minding to subdue the Oricians, and invading them with an Army, said; That finding them at odds with themselves he had sent them an Army. Such of late have been the results of the Turkish Council, if they should display their Ensignes against the Persian in the East, or against the Western Empire; where his Martial Senate resolved for the West; for that the expedition under-

Y y

taken.

Ἀυλὸς ἐὼν ἐ-  
στὺς, αὐτομα-  
λῶ αὐτομα-  
λῶς ὡς.  
Musans.

Ag. 2. r.  
Psal. 133. 2.

Philippus Macedo Oricios suos hostes in po-  
testatem redigere, & in hoc exercitum misisset,  
scripsit, Misos à se milites, quod comperisset  
eos seditionibus vexari. Thuan. hist. Rom.  
5. pag. 318.

Inter tot dissidentes religione, lingua, moribus, nationes, ex quibus auxiliar. m exercitum conflari necesse est, procul dubio esse quin male convenient, ac proinde lentè & improspere administrari: Hec in Divano agitata. Thuan. Histor. Tom. 5. ad an. 1592. pag. 277. edit. Genevæ, A. D. 1620.

taken against the Christians in the West, was there safest, where their discords were greatest; so a mighty storm fell on Hungary. Such dangers from abroad might be weighed by

them that have from our dissensions at home suck'd no small advantage. And to boot it would be the soundest advertisement, to strike at the root of all sin, and especially those Epidemical ones that have pulled on our heads these National judgments; and to know how sin is best drowned in the tears of Repentance; and the best evidence of true repentance is the

خبر المندامة قلة الخلاف

Arabic. Adag. 68.

forsaking of sin, according to that Arabique adage, Optimum penitentia est paucitas delicti; That is accounted the truest repentance,

which is accompanied with fewest faults; serious sorrow for sin is a sure forsaking of sin, and there can be no sound repentance, where is no solid amendment. If such meditations would fall under our considerations, the Author of these might hope, that This, or Antidotes of this nature might be sought after, and prayers directed to heaven for wished success. And no doubt

Ὅς καὶ θεοῖς ἐπιπείθεται μάλα ἔκλυον αὐτοῖς. As true a position of a blind Poet, as of the blind man, John 11. 31.

K. Gustavus. Ferdinand. 3.

God would then give audience when our devotions are incensed with piety; nor can there in this spiritual warfare be better weapons than prayers and tears. That hardy Swede dreaded more the prayers of that Christian Emperor than his forces; surely at last prayers in the one prevailed above arms in the other. United prayers would compass this Island with greater safety, than her Seas, or Shipping: And

And it seems by an *Ancient story*, this *Nation* long ago to be owned as Gods *peculiar*, by an answer returned to a holy Prelate, anxious of the *State and Regal issue well nigh extinguished*; *Regnum Anglorum est Dei, post se (Edward Confessor) providit Regem ad placitum sui.*

*Brithwoldo apud Glasconiam excubiis lubricanti & de Regia stirpe*

*penè deleta angenti, responsum est, Regnum Anglorum est Dei, &c. Will. Malmesb. de Gestis Anglor. lib. 2. pag. 51. Londini.*

Lastly, though small is the appearance of the approbation of this Treatise to the Practick thereof, yet the *prayers of the faithful* may even in this behalf prevail; and herein *Gods will be done*. The *Setter* hereof hath to his best skil *planted and watered*, the *increase is from God*; *Philosophia paucis contenta scholaribus*, Christian Philosophy is content with few scholars, and *Wisdom is pleased to be justified of her children*. And remain it will (if for no other end) yet as a *Needle* in the *Card* to shew our aberrations.

*Soli Deo UNICO & TRINO*  
*Honor & Gloria.*

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*FINIS.*

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# ERRATA.

## In the Book.

**P**ag. 7. l. 18. r. ἀμεταμέλητα. l. 26. r. μεταμεληθείς. p. 11. l. 15. r. intimating. p. 20. l. 36. r. κυκλίδε. p. 29. l. 23. r. the. p. 33. l. 30. r. Nerra. p. 37. l. 16. r. τασιν. p. 99. l. 32. r. as do. p. 120. l. 13. r. lepers. p. 124. l. 18. r. convene. p. 135. l. 6. r. Bench. p. 137. l. 28. add, but. p. 147. l. 18. dele, a. p. 171. l. 5. r. composed. p. 184. l. 2. dele, and. r. bait and. p. 208. l. 6. dele, yet. p. 212. l. 17. r. so drives. p. 228. l. 16. r. fides. p. 271. l. 29. dele, the. p. 316. l. 13. r. the fifth.

## In the Margin.

Pag. 4. l. 10. r. הנהיג. l. ult. r. *Levis*. 5. 5. *Psal.* 32. 5. l. 5. r. *Psal.* 26. 7. p. 11. l. 7. r. שכיב. p. 17. l. 18. r. *heres*. p. 21. l. 5. dele, a. p. 22. l. 21. r. λαβόν. p. 24. l. 14. r. *tygh*. l. 31. r. τασιν. p. 30. l. 17. r. *Boior*. p. 32. l. 1. r. *Apparet*. p. 33. l. 16. r. *Thevet*. p. 34. l. 21. r. *iffe*. p. 42. l. 5. r. *solvendo*. p. 47. l. 12. r. *ialgō*. p. 49. l. ult. r. *Mercer*. p. 54. l. 17. r. *σληνμαι*. p. 59. l. 13. r. *dividit*. l. 16. r. *Toms*. 1. p. 60. l. 15. r. *σλην*. p. 70. l. 5. r. *ascavoir par le main*. p. 72. add again 5. l. 20. *Walden*. tom. 2. de *Sacrament*. cap. 137. p. 99. l. 9. r. *Occulte ago*, apud *Deum ago*. p. 103. l. ult. r. *animis*. p. 116. l. 8. r. *quin aliquis*. p. 117. l. 18. r. *concilium*. 119. l. 4. r. *promulgatum*. p. 120. l. 6. r. *ite*. p. 126. l. 7. r. *salu*. p. 138. l. *pennit*. r. *qui*. p. 172. l. 29. r. *fatta*. p. 186. l. 9. r. *consentaneum*. p. 194. l. 6. r. *importabile*. p. 230. l. 12. r. *הנהיג*. *ibid*. *καθαιεν*. p. 238. l. *pennit*. r. *Orthod*. p. 271. l. 12. r. *Mason*. p. 298. l. *pennit*. *ἀπαγιονον*.

